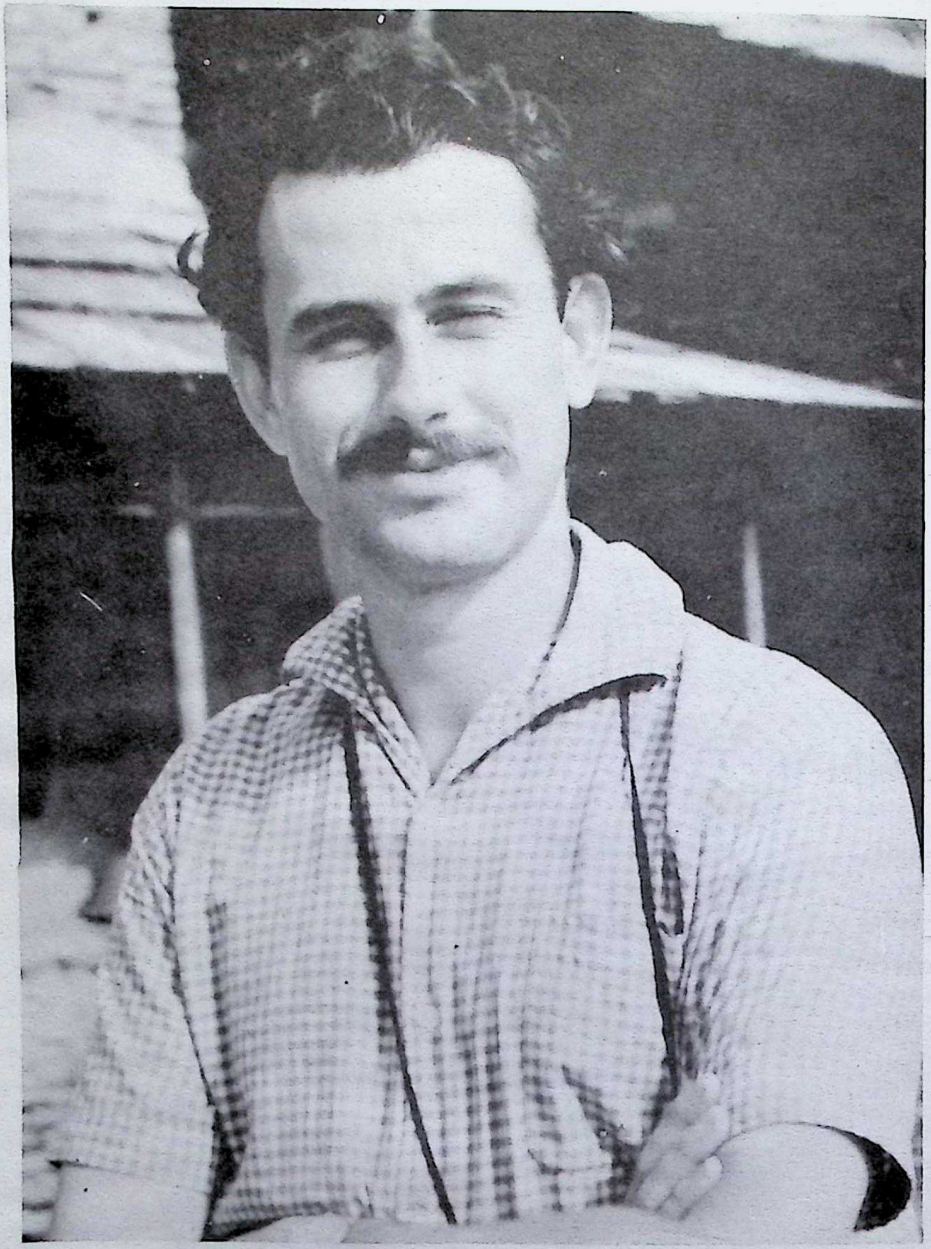
THE GURUNGS

BERNARD PIGNÈDE



BERNARD PIGNÈDE IN THE FIELD

(reproduced from a colour slide, probably taken
at Mohoriya by his assistant
Chandra Bahadur Ghotane)

BERNARD PIGNÈDE

THE GURUNGS

A Himalayan population of Nepal

English edition by

SARAH HARRISON
and
ALAN MACFARLANE

Ratna Pustak Bhandar

RATNA PUSTAK BHANDAR
Bhotahity, Kathmandu
Nepal.

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ALL THE ROYALTIES FROM THE SALE OF THIS BOOK
WILL GO TO THE PIGNÉDE FOUNDATION
FOR GURUNG CULTURAL RESEARCH.

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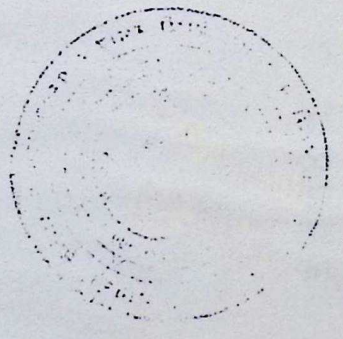

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PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In 1958 Bernard Pignède spent some seven months among the Gurungs and particularly in the village of Mohoriya at the western end of Gurung territory. He worked with his assistant Chandra Bahadur Ghotane to undertake the first extended study of these peoples.[1] Pignède returned to Paris where he drafted out most of the book, but died tragically at the age of twenty-nine in 1961. His colleagues, and particularly Professor Louis Dumont, brought the book to press and it was published in France in 1966.[2]

Despite the absence of a formal training in anthropology before he went to Nepal, and the relatively short time he spent among the Gurungs, the book was immediately recognised as a major contribution to the anthropology of the Himalayas. When in 1968 my wife Gill and I went to do further anthropological fieldwork among the Gurungs we took a copy of the book and soon began to appreciate what an excellent work it was. We made a rough English translation of the book, a copy of which we deposited in the Tribhuvan University library for those scholars who found it difficult to read French. We had been through much of the text with informants in the Gurung village of Thak and had made a visit to Mohoriya where we checked specific details and undertook a re-census based on Pignède's notes. Pignède's work seemed substantially correct, though naturally some modifications could be made.

Since 1966 a good deal more work has been done on the Gurungs (see additional bibliography), but it has not replaced Pignède's book. It has built on it, supplemented it, but always presumed its presence. His book has become a classic, not merely within Gurung or Nepalese studies, but within Himalayan anthropology as a whole. It therefore seemed worth making a proper English translation available to the many scholars who find it difficult to use. With the kind permission

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[1] C.B. Ghotane's reminiscences on working with Bernard Pignède follow this preface.

[2] Professor Dumont's editorial preface and appreciation of the author follow. (cf p.*xxix*).

of the publishers and Professor Dumont, and the support of Dr. A.W.Macdonald, this work has now been completed.

We decided that rather than just provide a translation, we would take the opportunity to incorporate further material which would indicate modifications and additions to his book. These additions and modifications are either based on our own work or have been provided by a number of interested Gurungs who have read the text thoroughly.

However, it is important to maintain the integrity of Pignède's work. We have therefore resisted the temptation to change it, even in the one or two cases where we know he was wrong, or where his phrasing may, taken in isolation, give some offence to the Gurungs. It is essential to remember that he was working over thirty years ago, at a time when far less was known about Nepal than today. Rather than alter his text we have decided to comment on it by way of footnotes and longer appendices. These are put after the text and are numbered within the text in square brackets. To avoid confusion, we have tended to use Pignède's spelling of Gurung words such as *pucu* or *klihbrĩ*, although there are, of course, many different ways in which Gurung words can be written.

Only two minor changes have been made to the text itself. Firstly, Pignède made a number of references to particular people in the village of Mohoriya. These were not always very flattering, and because we felt that they might cause some unhappiness we have omitted their names. The village plans (figs. 6 and 7) have also been modified to the same end. Secondly, while Pignède's knowledge of the Gurung language was remarkable when one considers that he was only there for such a short time, a few corrections have been made with the help of Gurung speakers. These have been noted in square brackets within the text.

The book can thus be read as Pignède wrote it, but it can also be used with the supplementary material which gives an alternative interpretation to some of his statements, and up-dates the information to the early 1990's.

This up-dating and commentary comes from four principal sources. Alan Macfarlane and Sarah Harrison have subsequently visited the Gurungs five times (1986, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991) for a total period of some nine months. During two of these visits we re-visited Mohoriya and undertook a re-census of the village on the basis of Pignède's first census and the re-census taken by Alan Macfarlane in 1969. Visits to

Gurung villages have allowed us to see how things have been changing over the 33 years since Pignède made his visit.

A second source of information is provided by Chandra Bahadur Ghotane. It was quite obvious from Pignède's own account how much the book owed to Pignède's principal field assistant. It therefore seemed essential to obtain his reactions and comments on the work once it became available in English.

A third source of commentary is provided by Lt. I.B.Gurung with whom Alan Macfarlane and Sarah Harrison had worked over a number of years and who had been a co-author of the earlier **Guide to the Gurungs** (1990). I.B. Gurung has for long been interested in Gurung history and the problems they face in a changing world.

Finally, since Pignède's most original and interesting work lay in his account of the shamanic system of the *pucu* and *klihbrī*, it seemed sensible to ask a particularly articulate and learned *pucu* to comment on the text. Yarjung Tamu, the son of a renowned *pucu* of Yangjakot, kindly agreed to do this. With the help of Bala Tamu and other friends, he went through the text and made a number of valuable comments on orthography and matters of fact.

What is most encouraging is that Yarjung found that, while there were some minor mistakes, Pignède had, on the whole, given a very convincing and accurate account of the complex world of the *pucu*. This judgment has been endorsed by the most thorough western student of the myths and rites of the *pucu*, Dr. Simon Strickland and others (see Appendix E).

Yarjung Tamu was not only able to comment on the details. Because of his role as a *pucu*, he had access to the written and unwritten materials in which are recorded the esoteric history of the Gurungs. Together with Bhovar Tamu, he has provided an account of the history of the Gurungs based on the traditional oral myths. While modifying the English expression a little, this has been left as much as possible in the words of Yarjung and Bhovar. (Appendix J)

This account provides an alternative interpretation, which can be read alongside those provided by Pignède, Macfarlane and other western anthropologists, and the somewhat different version which is given in the notes by C.B.Ghotane. It is obvious that a number of conflicting interpretations of the early history of the Gurungs, and particularly the origins of what Pignède calls the Carjat and Solahjat, are now being

given. Some suggest different origins, some suggest a joint origin. Some place their ancestors in the north, others to the south. Some give high prominence to the role of Tibetan culture, others discount this.

Such contention is almost universal in the societies studied by anthropologists whose history is mainly held in oral texts. In the end there is no final way of settling the disputes and the reader will have to judge for his or her self. One way of reconciling the apparently diametrically opposed accounts given here would be to suggest that while all the Gurungs (and many other highland groups in Nepal with whom they share so much) originated from the north, probably from western China, different groups may have reached their present position by different routes. For instance, it might be that the so-called 'Carjat' and the Ghale came down further to the East, thus avoiding Tibet, and then moved westwards along the Himalayas, arriving a little before the so-called 'Solahjat' who came down through Tibet. Then the various groups joined up, as most legends agree, at the village of "Kohla" on the southern slopes of the Annapurna range.

This suggestion is as open to criticism as the others. The important point is that for many years anthropologists have stressed that the idea of the "tribe" is an extremely elusive concept and often imposed on a set of disparate peoples from the outside. In periods of dramatic economic and political change, such as the present, ethnic similarities and differences become particularly important and legends of origin are closely scrutinised. The Gurungs, like many other groups, are engaged in this process.

We hope that this book will show some of the distortions which have been imposed on Gurung culture and history by outsiders. By allowing a number of different versions to stand side by side, it may help all those concerned with the peoples of the Himalayas to see how complex are the representations and self-representations of these ancient wandering peoples, who blend into each other, but also maintain their autonomy. As far as "the solution" is concerned, we are left with the conclusion attributed to Xenophon, "The final truth he would not himself know it, for all is but a woven web of guesses".

Sarah Harrison and Alan Macfarlane, Cambridge, April 1992

MEMORIES OF WORKING WITH BERNARD PIGNÈDE

We met by chance. I had heard that there was a French man wanting to work among the Gurungs while I was at College in Kathmandu. When we met, Pignède said that he had worked among other tribal peoples so was not a stranger to the hardships of village life. He had no particular idea of where he would go, so I suggested my own Gurung village of Mohoriya. We went there in about March, 1958.

Altogether, he stayed in the village for about four months. He also spent seven days in Ghandrung. At the end of this time we went trekking in Lamjung. Starting from Siklis, where we spent about three weeks working with an old *pucu*, we walked from west to east, through the Gurung country, for about two months. It was during the monsoon, and the paths were infested with leeches.

Pignède and I spoke together in English, though I did not speak it very well at first. He spoke very little Gurung and so asked me to act as interpreter. Pignède intended to make a small Gurung grammar and dictionary. After about two months he could speak it in a very basic way, for instance asking simple questions such as, "Where are you going?", "How old are you?" He would give me questions to ask and then I would have to translate the answers back into English. Pignède demanded that the answer accurately reflected the question, and if it did not he would put the question again and again.

He lived and worked in an old granary, on the first floor of a house. He used to prepare his own food, but also employed a boy from Lamjung and taught him to cook. This boy went on to become the chef for the Nepalese Ambassador in England. At first Pignède ate European food, though later took to the local diet.

Pignède was immensely inquisitive, very sharp, and knew how to get the answers he wanted. He was always asking questions. During the four months he was in the village, two months were almost entirely devoted to working with a *pucu* from the neighbouring village of Dangsing, who slept and ate with us, all in one room. During the rest of

the time, we would routinely work for 15-16 hours a day. We talked and talked the whole day and Pignède wrote the whole night.

I never felt that he had much of a sense of humour and he was a very hard and obstinate man. For example, he always wanted to take the shortest route when walking from place to place, and would not be dissuaded. When walking up to the high village of Pasgaõ, he was not deterred by my warnings that the direct route was very difficult and dangerous. On another occasion he wanted to go up to the snow line on the hills opposite Ghandrung, and did so, alone, for two days, although I advised him not to.

One of Pignède's legs was a bit weaker than the other and he limped a little, but he was an excellent walker, walking very fast and able to walk for twenty-four hours without stopping or getting too tired. He never seemed depressed or became ill or suffered from headaches. Pignède was a man who could accommodate any kind of hardship, face any kind of inconvenience. He was single-minded, only talking about what he wanted to do. I felt that something was driving him on. He was a very strong person, but he could not stop and relax. I sometimes gathered people together to sing and dance, but Pignède did not really enjoy this. He visited the *rodi* but he did not dance. He did not enjoy bantering or flirting with the girls. He just wanted to finish the work as soon as possible.

I kept urging him to stay a little longer, telling him that, as a guest, he need not pay for his food and lodging, and arguing that an extra few weeks would make a great difference. But he wanted to finish, saying "I have to get back, I have to complete this work". There was a huge farewell party when Pignède left the village.

I think that he worked day and night when he returned to France and wore himself out. He wrote to me twice, in one letter asking for further information about the *pae*, which I was unable to get as it involved going back to the village and I was by then back in Kathmandu. He also wrote that he would return at some point to do some further work. I had offered to accompany him. Later, with great sadness, I heard of his death, apparently as a result of a gas leak in his room.

C.B.Ghotane

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The publishers of the original book by Bernard Pignède, Mouton & Co. and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, have kindly given permission for this translation and publication to be made. Professor Louis Dumont has also given us encouragement in this work. The Centre d'Études de L'Inde et de L'Asie du Sud in Paris, and in particular the Director, Eric Meyer most generously made Pignède's notes and photographs available to us. The negatives of the original plates have disappeared so we chose a number which were as close to the originals in subject-matter as possible.

Financial support for the work upon which this translation is based was provided by the Economic and Social Research Council (within the project: "Social Change in Central Nepal"), the University of Cambridge and the Renaissance Foundation. We are most grateful to all of these.

Institutional support for this project was provided by the Department of Social Anthropology in Cambridge. In particular we would like to thank Sarah Green for her very considerable assistance in producing the camera-ready copy of the text, and to Humphrey Hinton for many kinds of help. Penny Lang typed the original rough translation into a computer and made improvements.

In Nepal, the help of C.B.Ghotane, Lt. I.B.Gurung, Yarjung Tamu and Bhovar Tamu is acknowledged in the Preface. Judith Pettigrew made an invaluable contribution by collating the various comments, adding her own, and helping to make Pignède's meaning clearer to the Gurung participants in this joint enterprise. Don Messerschmidt kindly allowed us to use his 'fax' facilities in Pokhara, which made some of the later additions possible. A continuing debt is to earlier informants and friends Prem Bahadur Gurung, Ujesing Gurung, Lt. Bhuwansing Gurung and Badrasing Gurung. Our family in Thak, Surje Bahadur, Dilmaya and their children, have added immeasurably to both our pleasure and our knowledge, as have our other young friends, in particular Durga Gurung, Premkaji Gurung and Krishna Gurung. Dr. Chandra Prasad Gurung,

Deputy Director of the Annapurna Conservation Area Project, Dr. Harka Gurung and Professor Jagman Gurung are among those who have stimulated and informed us over the years. Colonel John Cross kindly commented on an early version of the translation and gave us much general information.

BERNARD PIGNÈDE

THE GURUNGS

A Himalayan population of Nepal

Edited by Louis Dumont

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Bernard Pignède, who died aged twenty-nine in 1961, had completed the present monograph by the end of 1959 and had been awarded the diploma of the École des Hautes Études (6th section). It is not certain that he would have published it if he had lived as he was preparing for a further trip to Nepal, and through the study of Tibetan intended to deepen and enlarge the analysis, as one will see. However, the work was only at a preliminary stage, and the editor having gathered together the papers left by Pignède, on the basis of the evidence had to restrict himself to publishing the monograph itself, rich in detail as it is. Only those manuscript notes, sometimes pencilled in the margin, where the author's intentions are clear have been included. The rare insertions by the editor are put between { }. Thanks are due to Mr. Macdonald for his help on delicate points. One chapter alone, the fifth, has been altered for clarity when it was published elsewhere in an English translation.[1] *For the rest, the typescript text of the monograph and all the original documents have been preserved for the use of specialist researchers.*

One can, however, mention here an idea in the introduction to the manuscript which shows in what direction our friend's thoughts were developing. He was concerned to represent the social organisation and religion of the Gurungs by analysing them in a comparative perspective, using the information on other tribes, from published works and from the manuscript notes of Brian Hodgson kept in the India Office Library "containing much valuable information, sadly little used until the present". Pignède saw clearly the risks in doing this, but he was confident that he could find the material for comparison in the sources to which he had access. Ordinarily so prudent, he wrote in categorical terms in his introductory scheme:

"It seems to me useful to show, from now on, that one cannot present Nepalese society as the sum of little heterogeneous local groups,

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[1] *Contributions to Indian Sociology, VI, 1962, pp. 102-119.*

of tribes of whom one can present a complete and significant analysis, without envisaging the relations which exist between them. I think that the region occupied by the hill tribes must be considered as a vast cultural arena in which one can find common institutions in groups that differ according to local culture, but are similar in their fundamental structure".

This comparative intention explains why, in Pignède's papers, the notes of readings (taken from Hodgson, but also from Buchanan, Vansittart and others) take as much space in the new analysis of the Gurungs. On two points only, the internal hierarchy of the tribe and the funeral ritual, can one distinguish the main lines of development from the notes intended to explain them; however, these are only sketches which it has not been possible to use for that reason.[2]

Were there other possible materials for publication among the author's manuscript notes? There were elements of a Gurung grammar, but Mr Snellgrove, Professor of Tibetan in London and a personal friend of Pignède's, who knew the manuscript, judged that it was not sufficiently advanced to justify publication. There remains, as the only elaborated text, a French translation of the literature of the priests. This translation was done early on and is obviously provisional; after consultation with Mr Macdonald it has not appeared to be sufficient for publication as it is. Mr. Macdonald proposes to discuss it with competent Gurung informants with a view to future publication.

There follows a brief biography. A modest monument to friendship, it tries to evoke the workman beside his work, to make known the quality of the warp on which was woven the research which one has the sad pleasure of presenting here, the fabric cut short.

The editor has received from the École the most sincere and attentive collaboration. I will only mention the expert care given by M. Hartmann to the photographic illustrations. But my thanks are extended to all those who have tried to serve the memory of our friend.

Louis Dumont

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[2] *The photographs are the author's, the complete captions are in the "Table of photographs".*

BERNARD PIGNÈDE

(March 16th, 1932-November 23th, 1961)

I saw Bernard Pignède for the first time in the autumn of 1958. On his return from a trip to Nepal, Professor von Furer-Haimendorf had told me of a meeting with a likeable young Frenchman in Kathmandu who, although not a professional anthropologist, was proposing to study a Nepalese tribe and had asked him for advice as to a possible choice. Persuaded that he was serious, Professor von Furer-Haimendorf recommended the Gurungs. The young man had no grant of any kind; he had earned his living in different parts of the world and had decided to use his meagre savings to pursue his studies. Impressed and naturally intrigued as to the outcome, he told me of the approaching return of this amateur anthropologist.

I was not, therefore, unduly surprised when, some few months later, Bernard Pignède came to ask me to supervise the monograph that he intended to write on the Gurungs. I put to him any number of questions, and while impressed in my turn by his genuineness, I did not doubt that a long and difficult task lay ahead. I certainly did not think that exactly thirteen months later the work would be completed, a thesis for which the examiners awarded, with high praise, the diploma of the École des Hautes Études. If we think of the effort that the completion of this monograph represents, directly or indirectly, we must conclude that Bernard Pignède had worked almost night and day for a year. He had not only to improve his linguistic background and begin his studies in Tibetan with M. Stein in Paris and Dr. Snellgrove in London, but also to arrange his material. In addition he broadened his general knowledge,

familiarised himself with certain theoretical developments and initiated himself into the sociology of India. Finally there was the revision and sometimes the rewriting of this or that chapter, after I had made my comments.

It was a pleasure to collaborate with Bernard Pignède. If some area of his enquiry seemed obscure and in need of supplementary data, one found that he had collected the information; when the possibility of comparison arose, he was found to have already envisaged such a possibility - often while still in the field; and when I happened to suggest that his analysis might be furthered along a certain line, he invariably worked out within a few weeks a development which exceeded my expectations.

I naturally asked myself then those same questions that I have been asking ever since. How had this young man acquired from the outset what others take so long to learn? How had he achieved that difficult synthesis of the dual roles of field-worker and analyst? My reply would be that he had a true calling for the profession. But this was a facile answer which might have contented us while Bernard was still alive and such questions, however personal, might still be asked of him, while the passing of time would reveal more completely that which we had failed to ask. But we are now left to complete the answer ourselves, for less than two years after receiving his diploma, just when he had been made Chef de Travaux at the École, and while he was preparing to return to Nepal, Bernard Pignède met his death by accident. All those who knew him in French and British Universities during the brief period of three years know what a void his death has left. It was this feeling, doubtless shared by his many friends in other parts of the world, that induced me to write these lines. David Pocock, who met Bernard twice, confirmed my intention by writing to me that there was indeed something exemplary in this man's life. After their conversations, he had used the phrase "integrity of purpose" to characterise Bernard. This is an excellent expression, for it evokes on the one hand his astonishing will power, on the other a characteristic subjection of that will for a purpose: a self-contained man, yet one who would not want to alienate the people that he met, the object of his interest and study. Will is here the link between the integrity of the subject and that of the object. For the rest, his honesty, his sensitivity, his care for detail, these were perhaps only the consequences. To illustrate this "integrity of purpose", to try and throw

light upon the anthropological calling of Bernard Pignède, I shall summarise a very incomplete but already revealing story of his life from what he himself, his parents and a few of his friends have told me.

Bernard Pignède was born in I932, the third of five children in a family which belonged to what is known as the Parisian lower middle class. His father was a commercial agent. After finishing his secondary education, Bernard, in accordance with his parents' wishes, entered the Ecole des Hautes Études Commerciales. His sister became a doctor, one of his brothers a dentist, another an agricultural engineer and Bernard, even in his travels, remained ready to take on such family responsibilities as might fall to him. But it is clear that he possessed an inner drive of quite another order, one that is difficult to define precisely. As a mere toddler he was found to be suffering from a partial paralysis, which called not only for medical treatment but also for voluntary exercises to ensure the movement of the whole right side of his body. The only perceptible trace of these difficulties was to be found in the fact that in order to write, he was obliged to support and push his right hand with his left. Bernard himself emphasised that he had to exercise his will at an early age. We can see in this disability, suffered and overcome, the first source of his sympathy, never ostentatiously displayed, but ever-ready for the downtrodden. Between his eleventh and twelfth year he suffered another terrible test. It was an ordeal which affected his personality and one which he could not help discussing with his friends. He began to fall prey to acute headaches of such unbearable intensity that he feared that he would lose his mind. It was thought that these were due to pressure upon the brain, but that an operation would be useless. In time the pressure eased, though Bernard suffered from recurrent headaches all his life. This was in 1944, just after the liberation of Paris. Bernard's companions in the hospital were men with head wounds inflicted in the fighting, many of whom were poor. He often wrote their letters for them. Times were bad and food scarce. Bernard's parents used to bring small luxuries for him, and they tell how he sometimes made them take these back because his fellow patients could not afford such things and Bernard wanted no privileges for himself. He might have shared them as far as they would go, but no doubt even that would not satisfy him. Thus, this child of twelve years, who had just come through a terrible ordeal, already had a strict sense of social justice. On his return home, since he was not allowed to go back to school for several months he

passed his time by making a model of a warship out of odd scraps, exact to the last detail. I have seen it in his parents' home, an object of over a yard in length and much more the work of the patient craftsman or the retired sailor than the work of a child, whom we might expect to tire rapidly of such minute details. Bernard already had a taste for hard work, of sustained effort and of accomplishing the task he set himself.

As soon as possible, he devoted his school holidays to travel. At sixteen he went to the Pays Basque on a Zellidja scholarship. Later, thanks to youth camps, he was able to visit Morocco, Algeria and Italy. The following year he went by bicycle to Athens and visited the islands of the Aegean. He always travelled cheaply as was unwilling to take from his parents more than it would have cost them to keep him at home. In the following year he attended lectures on sociology at the Sorbonne, while continuing his studies in commerce. The following vacation found him in Crete and in Egypt, where he earned his living by drawing for an architect. From there, helped by the Egyptians, he moved down to the Sudan and as far as Central Africa. Bernard was always proud that he had seen the Nuer. He had told David Pocock how a fellow student in the law faculty had lent him Evans-Pritchard's book, which was the first social anthropological monograph that he had come across, and what an experience it had been to see the subjects of the analysis in the flesh. He returned via Syria, Lebanon and Israel. During this time he was primarily interested in men and their institutions, for instance, the Israeli kibbutz.

On completing his studies, and because his health had exempted him from military service, he got his father's permission to devote a corresponding period of time to a world tour. After pondering over something he told me in confidence, I detect a moral aspect in this decision. He had been extremely preoccupied by social, by which we must understand moral, problems: if one has such opinions, how can one effect them, what can one do? Had he been physically fit, he might well have been a conscientious objector. By exempting him the doctors freed him of this choice, but he nevertheless felt he must do something equivalent. For Bernard was quite the opposite of an anarchist. He was one who wanted to be alive to obligations, but believed in the right to choose them. The nature of his choice is somewhat obscure: certainly he wanted to see how men live, the poor above all. He was not one for party politics, but he sympathised with the trade unions. Thinking it

over, I imagine that perhaps he had at one time vowed allegiance to humanity at large and when, later, time and experience had made that seem puerile, he felt somewhat ashamed to admit it, preferring to leave his motives obscure. A need for commitment, combined with a youthful desire for discovery and wandering, seems likely. In the autumn of 1955 he obtained, with his father's assistance, a job in New York. He then went to teach French, Spanish and Latin to the future cadets of the New York Military Academy. He told us how the young boys had taxed him with questions of every sort, of the trouble that he had gone to in order to provide them with satisfactory answers, and how he had won their confidence in this way while still insisting upon good French discipline in the class room. After a year he was asked to stay on, but refused. He crossed Mexico and went as far as Yucatan in order to see the Maya, and then went on to Japan. Despite his lack of money, he studied the history of religions and, apparently, some anthropology, as he had already done in New York. He also accompanied a Japanese research student on a trip to the Ainu. After six or eight months in Japan he went to New Caledonia. Once again he had to earn his living, but this time he became a nickel worker, an employment which many do not endure for more than a few months. Had he wanted to share the life of these workers, among the most underprivileged of the world? Without doubt, but did he do anything to change their lot? It would have certainly not been easy, but we do not know. After this purgatory the Nepalese mountains, where he was to stay for six months, must have seemed a sort of paradise. Certainly he had no more than the bare minimum of funds, yet he carried out his research, shot a 16 mm. film which he later sold to a television company, and made musical recordings from which "Chant du Monde" in Paris made two records, one Gurung and the other Nepalese. On his return to Paris he set to work with the enthusiasm that I have described and the results which we will see. His vocation as an anthropologist had matured in the course of this world tour.

But this voyage is also the image of another which some of our young people, in France at least, have to accomplish if ever they are to find themselves. It is one that is begun with the impatience and restlessness of youth, with or without diplomas, pitting oneself unreservedly against the whole world. If all goes well, the voyager returns with some certainties and with a trade or calling. In that periplus, Bernard was rounding his last cape when an unexpected hazard engulfed

him. René Clair recently recalled the well known phrase: "I am sorry for those who were not rebels when they were twenty." One might add that while it is prudent to mistrust those who remain rebels too long, the passage from that state to another is not without its perils. Certainly Bernard Pignède does not seem, from the outside, to have been either a revolutionary or in revolt. Yet it is clear that he had a tortured spirit, that he sought, with unusual discretion, to distance himself from our society, and that there was in him from the outset a feeling of dissatisfaction and a desire for action. That this youthful refusal to adapt, which is a positive quality, had been overcome by him is shown by what I call his conversion to anthropology. For it is one thing to visit tribes in different parts of the world and quite another to submit oneself to the discipline of a profession, choosing it freely as one's future. Although invited elsewhere to carry out easier and doubtless more remunerative research, Bernard Pignede had firmly committed himself to the task, as he wrote in his last work programmes, of doing the sociology of Nepal. On the level of intentions, the circle was closed, and the young man's integrity had started to bear fruit in a piece of work.

But the return to dry land is a delicate matter, and Bernard was, in certain aspects at least, entirely aware of this. Concealed under a controlled manner and an equable humour, something of a struggle continued. It is clear that, whether from an incessant tension, and he had told his friends that his life was a constant battle, he had to learn very fast in the three last years that which would ordinarily have taken much more time to digest. Moreover, the transformation posed certain moral problems which did not leave him in peace. His last summer was particularly difficult. He suffered an emotional crisis which was to a certain extent a professional one as well. Among his papers I found notes for a letter which I had asked for but which was never written. Thinking of the analysis he was attempting to pursue on the material contained in his thesis, he expressed the fear - an excessive scruple - that the material he had collected might not lend itself to the new perspective from which he now envisaged it. We must remember that he recognised the need for a complete transformation.

I saw him again in October, thin but restored, more assured than ever before, his thought more mature and flexible as though tempered by this latest trial. I thought that he was secure in port. But at least one of his friends sadly confessed to no surprise, for "fragile as all our lives

are, his seemed more fragile than most". He was a born anthropologist and he came to discover his vocation, but it was not given him to accomplish it to the full.
L. D.

David Pocock and David Snellgrove have associated themselves with the writing of this memorial.

INTRODUCTION

Until 1950-1952, Nepal remained closed to explorers. Only a few rare, privileged, persons such as Sylvain Lévi were able to enter and pursue, for short periods, studies which revealed the immense possibilities this Himalayan country offered for research. After the political events which allowed the King to again become the effective head of Nepal, some scholars were authorised to undertake studies of the terrain[1].

Although some important anthropological material had been gathered, it was not until recently that several articles and a report written by a Japanese scientific expedition accompanying the mountaineering expedition of 1953 has been published[2].

The study presented here is, to my knowledge, the first tentative description of the different aspects of the society and culture of a Nepalese population.

The material on which it is based was gathered during a stay of nine months that I spent in Nepal in 1958[3].

By a happy combination of circumstance, I met Mr. von Furer-Haimendorf, Professor of Asian Anthropology at London University, and Mrs. E. von Furer-Haimendorf, on my arrival in Kathmandu. Professor Haimendorf had been through the country of the Gurungs, which extends to the north-west of Kathmandu, and strongly encouraged

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[1] Cf. E. von FURER-HAIMENDORF, *An Anthropological Bibliography of South Asia*, 1958 [vol. I], pp. 98-105.

[2] Jiro KAWAKITA, *Peoples of Nepal Himalaya*, Kyoto, 1957.

[3] This trip was made at my own expense.

me to concentrate my projected study on them. I followed his advice. Conforming to the Nepalese regulation that all foreigners undertaking an expedition outside the Kathmandu Valley must be accompanied by a liaison officer acceptable to the Government, I found a Gurung who agreed to fulfil this function. I had by chance met a young Gurung student, Chandra Bahadur, who had spent several years of his childhood in India and spoke Gurung, Nepali, Hindi and English. He was keen to accompany me. We chose to establish the centre of my research in Mohoriya, his natal village, where his family lived. This choice considerably helped my research. My friend Chandra Bahadur cleverly created around me a climate of trust by explaining the reason for my journey. A few days after my arrival at Mohoriya, a great feast of welcome was organised by the inhabitants, during which they told me that they would help me in my investigations. It is necessary to add that Europeans are not unknown to the Gurungs. Many men have served in the Gurkha troops under the command of British officers whom they held in high esteem. A good number of these soldiers had been through Europe during the two World Wars. I do not know how to express here my profound gratitude for the generous hospitality and patient cooperation which the Gurungs offered me during the seven months that I stayed with them.

Before starting my research, I was not able to familiarise myself with the Gurung language as it had never been studied before. I was forced to use my friend Chandra Bahadur as an interpreter while at the same time he was teaching me the Gurung language. After studying for two months, I was able to follow a conversation, and this gave me the possibility of checking the translations of my interpreter. In time, my knowledge of Gurung allowed me to talk directly with my informants and to translate, in collaboration with Chandra Bahadur, all the legends and mythical histories that I collected.

What form does this work take? Should it be presented as a monograph of a village, or as a monograph of the very extended group made up of all the Gurung population living in Gurung country? The intensive investigation made at Mohoriya gave material for a village monograph. The work was helped by the fact that the Gurung village forms an autonomous, independent, unit which is only superficially part of the Nepalese political organisation and is only connected with a few neighbouring villages. On the other hand, having gathered an appreciable

amount of information during short stays in villages more or less distant from Mohoriya, where the material allows I have endeavoured to widen the monograph from the village, with the purpose of understanding the system of relations characterising Gurung society.

I have thought it good to give a lot of description since the Gurungs have not been the object of any serious study until now. This description was almost entirely taken from the information that I gathered during my stay in Nepal. Thus I have preferred, in certain cases, not to analyse the descriptive accounts further, since this would only be possible if it were based on observations gathered from a much wider area.

In the absence of work bearing on other Nepalese populations, and in particular to those living on the periphery of Gurung country, it has not been possible for me to place Gurung culture precisely within the context of other Nepalese cultures. Nevertheless, I have endeavoured to show that Gurung culture is not foreign within the large group formed by the Indian, Tibetan Buddhist, and more generally, Himalayan civilisations. The study of material culture, social organisation, and religious beliefs of the Gurungs reveal numerous borrowings from these civilisations.

The first chapters of this work deal with the different aspects of material life: the country, population, habitat, technical skills, etc. This gives the material background within which the social and religious life of the Gurungs, the subjects of the other chapters, is organised. When working out this plan, I was influenced by that used by M. L. Dumont in his book entitled *Une sous-caste de l'Inde du Sud*, as that plan is clear and answers, in this case, the demands of the analysis. I read M. Dumont's book in New Delhi in the days preceding my departure for Nepal. This reading enabled me to fix the general direction of my research. On my return to France, I met M. Dumont for the first time and submitted my manuscript to him to criticise. To him I owe my profound thanks for his patient help and his numerous counsels and suggestions.

I thank equally Mr. C. von Furer-Haimendorf and Mrs. E. von Furer-Haimendorf who never ceased to encourage my work and to give me advice.

My gratitude goes also to Mr. W. Schulthess, representative of F.A.O. in Kathmandu and to Mr. W. Jacobsen, a Danish archaeologist, who gave me the benefit of their extensive knowledge of Nepal and

offered me generous hospitality. Also I remember the warm reception of M. Jestin, Consul de France at New Delhi, who helped me to overcome many difficulties, and I thank him for that.

TRANSCRIPTION OF GURUNG WORDS AND OTHERS

The Gurung language is not written and has never been the subject of a complete study. Thus I have phonetically transcribed Gurung words using a system of simple signs. Not being a linguist, I do not consider this system as perfect.

The vowels are:

i
e (closed)
è (open)
a (anterior)
à (posterior)
o (closed)
o‘ (open)
u is pronounced as *ou* in "you"; before an *e* it is pronounced like a French *u*.

The long vowel is noted with a dash above it.
The vowels i, e, a, o, u also appear in a nasalised form:

ĩ, ẽ, ã, õ, ũ.

I have distinguished two tones:

1. Deep tone - indicated by the vowel alone;
2. Shrill tone - indicated by the vowel followed by *h*, this tone ending in a sort of aspiration.

The consonants are pronounced as in English, except:

c pronounced *tch*
ch " *tch* plus aspiration
z " *dz* (palatal hiss)
j " *j* (as in French "je")
ć " *ts*
ćh " *ts* plus aspiration
ś " *ch*
h is a fricative
ṅ pronounced *ng* (as in "being")
ñ " *gn* (as in French "peigne")
w " *w* as in word "well"
y " as *y* in "you".

All the Gurung words are written in italics except for certain words that I will use in the normal way after they have been transcribed, and also proper nouns (which have a given spelling).

Nepali and Tibetan words, etc. are transliterated according to the classic procedure proper to that language.

The simplified orthography of Nepalese or Indian proper names is that used in Nepal or India: Gurung and not Gouroung, Kathmandu and not Kathmandou.

Abbreviations:

gur. for Gurung;
nep. for Nepali;
skrt. for Sanskrit;
tib. for Tibetan;
hin. for Hindi.

FIRST PART

COUNTRY - SKILLS - ECONOMY

CHAPTER I
THE COUNTRY AND ITS INHABITANTS

A. - GENERAL.

I. - The Country

a) *General Framework* (maps, fig. 1-2)

The country of the Gurungs lies in the extremely mountainous territory of Nepal, between 82° 30' to 84° longitude east and 28° to 28° 30' latitude north. The Indian peninsular is separated from Central Asia by a mountain barrier running from west to east, that of the central Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world. The slopes south of the Himalayan chain extend over the central and southern parts of Nepal whereas to the north there stand the high peaks of Daulagiri, Annapurna, Manaslu, Everest, Kangchenjunga etc., the northern slopes of which are in Tibet. These high peaks and the deep valleys which divide them split Nepal, in every sense, into little compartments long isolated from each other. Migrations from the north and south have led, in the course of time, to a very mixed population, with Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan languages. The geographical partitions of the country have allowed all these groups to co-exist while each, for a long time followed its peculiar evolution, independent of its neighbours. It is not uncommon, when one travels across Nepal, to pass from a Hindu to a Buddhist village a few kilometres away, without any transitional zone. To a large extent, this division between two cultures is explained by the topography.

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The country of the Gurungs lies in the extremely mountainous territory of Nepal, between 82° 30' to 84° longitude east and 28° to 28° 30' latitude north. The Indian peninsular is separated from Central Asia by a mountain barrier running from west to east, that of the central Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world. The slopes south of the Himalayan chain extend over the central and southern parts of Nepal whereas to the north there stand the high peaks of Daulagiri, Annapurna, Manaslu, Everest, Kangchenjunga etc., the northern slopes of which are in Tibet. These high peaks and the deep valleys which divide them split Nepal, in every sense, into little compartments long isolated from each other. Migrations from the north and south have led, in the course of time, to a very mixed population, with Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan languages. The geographical partitions of the country have allowed all these groups to co-exist while each, for a long time followed its peculiar evolution, independent of its neighbours. It is not uncommon, when one travels across Nepal, to pass from a Hindu to a Buddhist village a few kilometres away, without any transitional zone. To a large extent, this division between two cultures is explained by the topography.

4 THE GURUNGS

One can distinguish three large zones across Nepal. To the south, from east to west there extends a long band of flat and fertile lowland (the Terai), which is the northern part of the Gangetic plain.

Between the Terai and the high northern ranges there lies the central zone of high hills, the first outposts of the Himalayas. The altitude increases as one moves north to culminate at about 3,000 metres. In this region lie large valleys, the most famous being that in which the capital, Kathmandu, has developed.

To the north is the zone of the high mountains, (rising from 3,000 to 6-8,000 m.) which continues without a break into the territory of Tibet. Gurung country lies in the high valleys of the southern slopes of the Annapurna chain and of Himalchuli in the central region of high hills. To the south it is bordered by a series of small plains and large flat valley bottoms like that of Pokhara. The chain of hills which separates the valley of the Kali Gandaki from that of the Modi forms the western border, whilst the valley of the Buri Gandaki constitutes the eastern border. The Gurung villages rise gradually from between 1,500 and 2,500 m., and their high pastures reach to between 3,500 and 4,000 m. Gurung country is about 140 km. from east to west while it is only between 35 to 45 km. from north to south. A series of rivers flow from north to south and cut this rectangle into small divisions. The force of erosion in the Himalayan country is considerable. It carves the surface into uneven shapes, ridges extending in lines to the summits, deep valleys which rise steeply from 1,500 to 3,000 m. by a series of cliffs to a peak, and sloping plains on which the villages and the cultivated terraces cling.

The soil is mainly composed of schist which, with the force of the rain, frost and wind erodes and shales off. The bottom of the valleys is covered with fertile alluvial soil deposited by the streams.

The climate is of a complex type, changing according to the season and the altitude. The winter is very cold in the northernmost valleys, although in the rest of the country the temperature does not go lower than -8°C. The snowy period there is extremely short. The summer is hot (more than 38°C.), and very humid during the period of the monsoon, which gets worse as one descends towards the bottom of the valleys. In the rainy season, the rushing streams and rivers carry great masses of frothing water, draining the water-logged earth. In contrast, during the winter nearly all the springs dry up. We will deal with the climate in more detail when discussing the agriculture.

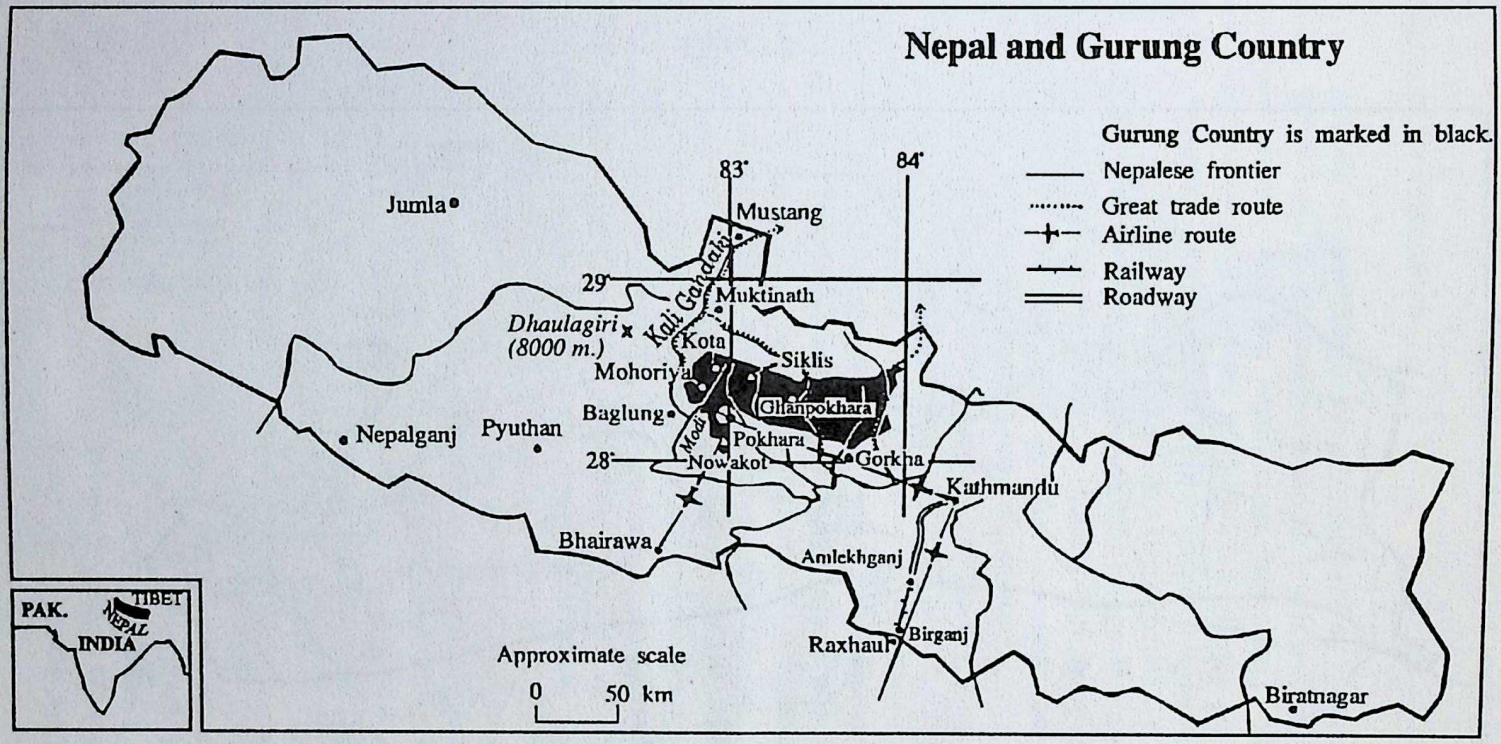

Nepal and Gurung Country
Gurung Country is marked in black.
Nepalese frontier
Great trade route
Airline route
Railway
Roadway
83°
84°
29°
28°
Jumla
Mustang
Kali Gandaki
Muktinath
Dhaulagiri
(8000 m.)
Kota
Siklis
Mohoriyal
Ghanpokhara
Baglung
Modi
Pokhara
Nepalganj
Pyuthan
Nowakot
Gorkha
Kathmandu
Bhairawa
Amlekhganj
Raxhaul
Birganj
Biratnagar
Approximate scale
0 50 km
PAK.
TIBET
NEPAL
INDIA

Figure 1

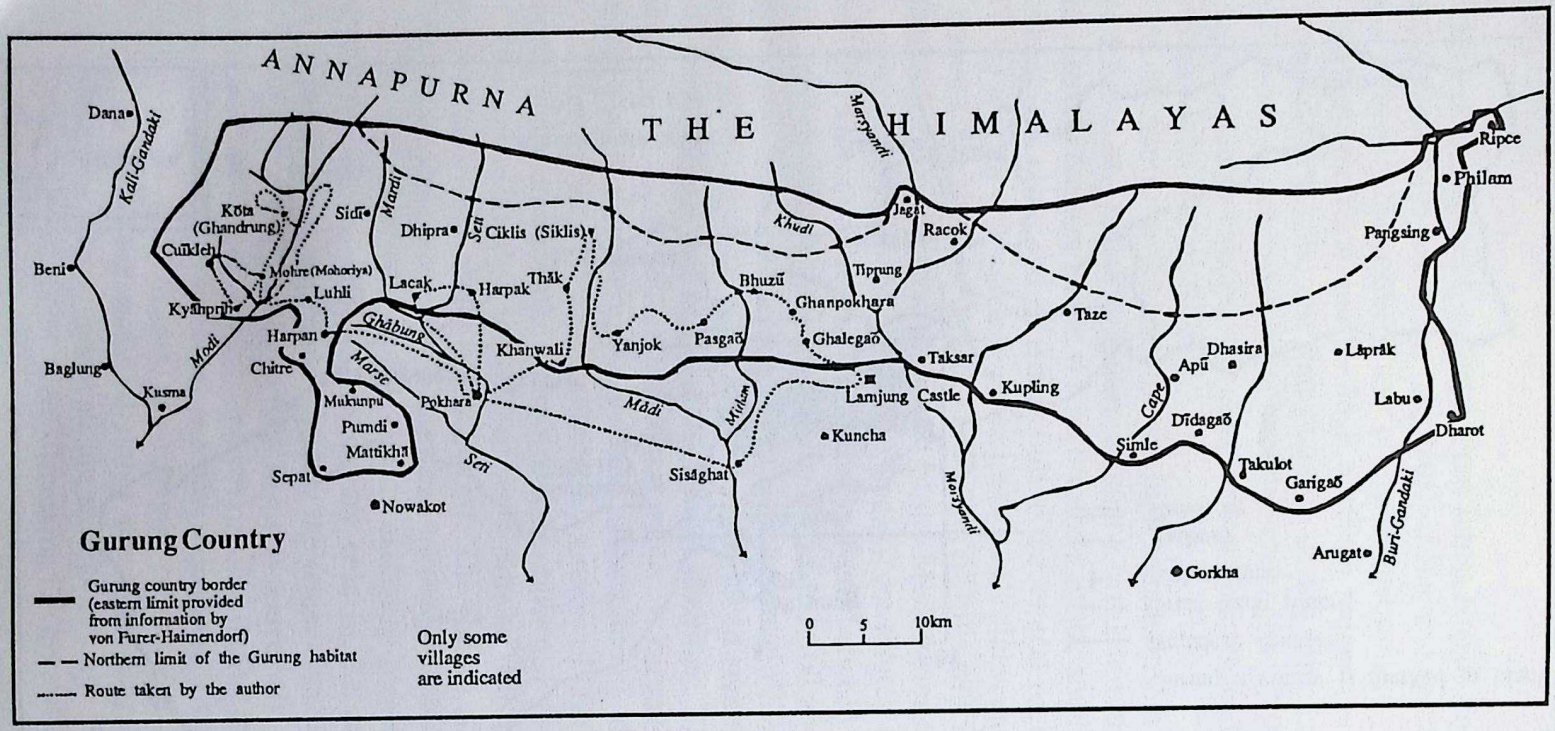

ANNAPURNA
THE HIMALAYAS
Dana
Kali-Gandaki
Beni
Baglung
Kusma
Modi
Kōta (Ghandrung)
Cuīkleh
Mohre (Mohoriya)
Kyānprīh
Luhli
Harpan
Chitre
Mukunpu
Pumdi
Mattikhā
Sepat
Nowakot
Sidī
Mardi
Dhipra
Seti
Ciklis (Siklis)
Lacak
Harpak
Thāk
Ghābung
Marse
Khanwali
Pokhara
Yanjok
Pasgaō
Mādi
Mūlum
Sisāghat
Bhuzū
Ghanpokhara
Ghalegaō
Khudi
Marsyandi
Jagat
Racok
Tiprung
Taksar
Lamjung Castle
Kuncha
Kupling
Taze
Cape
Simle
Dīdagaō
Apū
Dhasira
Takulot
Garigaō
Gorkha
Lāprāk
Labu
Dharot
Arugat
Buri-Gandaki
Pangsing
Philam
Ripce
Gurung Country
Gurung country border (eastern limit provided from information by von Furer-Haimendorf)
Northern limit of the Gurung habitat
Route taken by the author
Only some villages are indicated
0 5 10km

Figure 2

b) *Means of communication.*

As in the greater part of Nepal, there are no roads in Gurung country. Motor vehicles are unknown and all goods are carried on the human back. Paths, large and small, cross the country. The smaller rivers and streams can be forded in the winter. In the period of the monsoon, temporary bridges (*jhalon*) are constructed which one crosses by placing one foot in front of the other on a line of bamboo poles placed end to end. Several more substantial suspension bridges made with chains and planks are built on the principal routes. But many of the fast flowing rivers must be waded, while the roads are sometimes destroyed by landslides. Few people travel during the monsoon.

To the south of Gurung territory winds the great east-west highway which links Pokhara to Kathmandu (via Gorkha). Depending on the season, it takes nine or ten days to travel this distance, passing successively from the bottom of one valley to the summit of the ridge, for one must cut perpendicularly across all the valleys which run from north to south. From this principal route, three roads branch which go towards the north (fig.1). One follows the valley of the Buri Gandaki at the eastern edge of Gurung country and runs towards the Nepal-Tibet border. A second follows the beautiful valley of the Marsyangdi and, passing to the north of the Annapurna range, leads to the high valley of the Kali Gandaki and the region of Mustang. The last, leaving Pokhara by the great east-west route, takes the road which leads to Tibet by way of the valley of the Kali Gandaki and the Mustang region. Thus, the land of the Gurungs is only crossed north to south by one large road, through the valley of the Marsyangdi, the two other routes passing at the eastern and western edges. The Annapurna range, which is joined at the east of the Marsyangdi by other mountains, forms an almost impenetrable barrier because of its great height. Several passes can be used during one or two months in the year only, just before the arrival of the monsoon, when the snows of the higher regions have melted.

For several years, the Gurung country has relied on the capital Kathmandu and on India for air-lines. Air-fields have been constructed at Kathmandu, Pokhara and Bhairawa and planes serve these three points two, three or four times a week. The Bhairawa-Pokhara flight has considerable importance for the Gurungs. It carries all the Gurungs returning on leave from India and Malaysia where they are serving as

mercenaries in the Gurkha regiments.[1] From Pokhara, the soldiers travel towards the high valleys which fan out to the north of this little town. The plane from Bhairawa also brings Indian manufactured goods: cigarettes, textiles, sewing machines, etc. which find more and more Gurung customers.

In the interior of the Gurung country, a network of tracks link all the villages. In the north-south direction one can distinguish the tracks which follow the lines of the ridges and which are mainly used by cattle, the paths half way down the hills which join the villages, and the roads which follow the bottom of the valleys on each side of the main rivers. In the east-west direction, the tracks are rare because the rivers are difficult to ford. Each valley is generally crossed by two permanent routes. The one follows the high lands at about 3,000 m. on the slopes of the great Himalayan chain, the other, more to the south, crosses the rivers by well-made, permanent bridges.

This arrangement explains why relations between villages is much easier between two communities on the slopes of the same range than on opposite sides in the same valley. One can test this situation in studying the statistics of marriage in a village such as Mohoriya.

The roads are maintained by the villages through which they pass. To combat erosion, it is necessary to build long stone stairways, which wind over the slopes sometimes as steep as 55% and 60%. The village covers the cost of the work, which is undertaken collectively. Here and there along the paths stone platforms are built (*cautara*, nep.), shaded places where travellers can rest.[2]

c) *Flora.*

The flora, like the fauna, is abundant, and the species well recognised by the inhabitants. Unfortunately I can only translate a small number of the names I collected.

Trees and bamboos grow up as far as 3,000 m. and crops are cultivated to 2,500 m. The generic word for "wood" is *śĩ*; *dhũ* indicates, rather more, the idea of a plant. Among the trees one finds rhododendrons (*pot-śĩ*), large bamboos (*rhi-dhũ*), mountain bamboo (*mah*), alder (*ghyũ-śĩ*; Alnus nepalensis), sandalwood (*caewal*), cotton trees (*simal*; Bombax malabaricum), *khyu-śĩ* [*kyũsi*], whose bark irritates the skin, oaks (*na-śĩ*), pines (*tõga*; Garruga pinnata), *ṅata* (Ficus

1. Summit of a mountain to the north of Mohoriya (7080m).

2. Bottom of a valley violently attacked by repeated erosion.
The area of the fields gets smaller every year.

PLATE II

3. In the background, the Annapurna range; in the foreground, terraced fields of a southern Gurung village. Gurung country extends from north to south between these two planes.

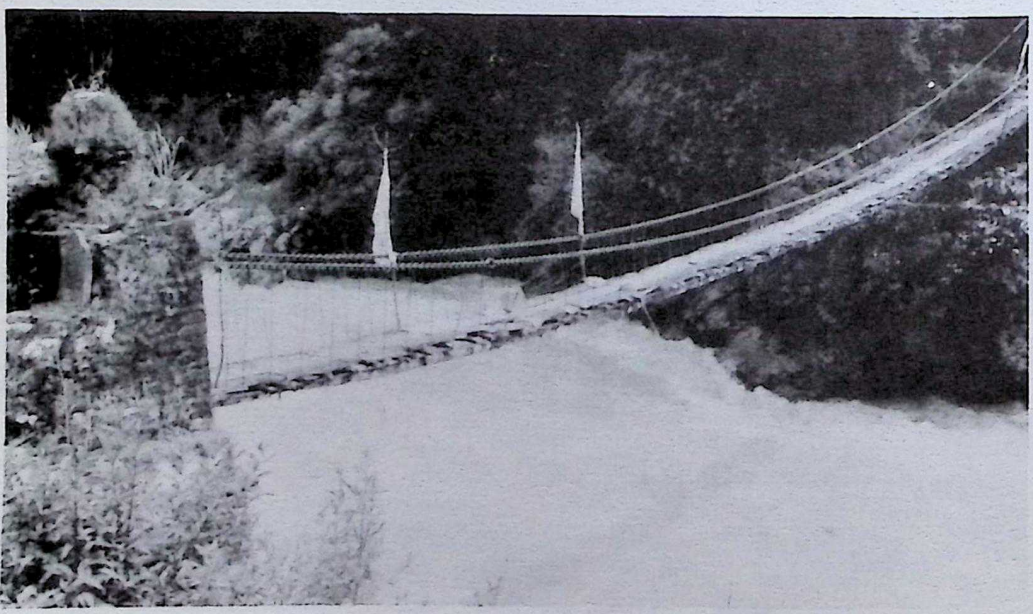
PLATE II

3. In the background, the Annapurna range; in the foreground, terraced fields of a southern Gurung village. Gurung country extends from north to south between these two planes.

PLATE III

PLATE IV

4. Transport and road cleaning.



5. Permanent bridge over the Modi river.

nemoralis), chestnuts (*phogi*) [*puhsi-ro*], walnuts (*kato*; Maesa indica), and the bushes (Berberis nepalensis).

The main crops are rice (*mlah*), millet (*nare*), maize (*makai*, nep.), barley (*karu*), buckwheat (*karsi*), and potato (*alu*, nep.). Maize and, very recently, potatoes have been introduced from India to Nepal which explains the absence of a Gurung word to describe them.

Forests are cut back to give the biggest possible area for cultivation. Deforestation poses serious problems as it leads to the devastating effects of erosion.

d) *Fauna.*

The fauna, small animals and, above all, insects, is very plentiful. In the lower regions one observes an indescribable multitude of different species. I learnt in Gurung many names of animals, but I could not establish, except in rare cases, the corresponding known species.

Among the primates, one encounters in a zone between 1,500 and 2,000 m. the macaques (Macaca assamensis) and the semnopithecus (Semnopithecus schistaceus); all the monkeys are called *timyo*. They are a great nuisance for they destroy the grain crops, and particularly maize. Gurungs generally speak of tigers (cẽ; old Gurung *to*); but certain clues make me think that they often confuse these with the leopard (pu-cẽ) for tigers are very rare in the highlands. They do not approach inhabited regions except when an epidemic disperses the forest game which they prey on. Above 2,500 m. one encounters some bears (*tamũ*) [*bhula*]. The jackals (*śela*) and the small foxes (*phyuro*) are numerous and raid the farm yards. We also note the existence of yellow throated martens (*hyuku*; Martes flavigula). The fields and woods are full of rats (*nimyu*), porcupine (*tũh-śĩ*), marmots, moles, etc.

Above 2,500 m. the fauna is very rich in deer, wild goats etc. which the Gurungs hunt enthusiastically. The *eh* (*thar* nep.) is a type of deer which one finds at about 3,000 m. in small numbers. The description of the *eh* by Landon[1] does not agree with what I have

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[1] LANDON, P., *Nepal*, London, 1928, vol. I, Appendix XIII.

observed. He calls them *Himalayan serow* (Capricornis sumatrensis; *thar* nep.) which do exist and are also called *thar*, but resemble a wild sheep.

Above 2,500 m. one finds numerous *tõsar* (*ghoral* nep.) which are wild, chestnut-coloured, Himalayan goats (Nemerhaedus hodgsoni), and the *pitkla* [*pitkyla*] (*jharal* nep.) which Landon calls Hemitragus jemlahicus, the product of a cross with domestic goats. The best known of this group of animal is the *togi* (*rate mirga*, nep.) which is a little red deer.[2] Finally, one should note the existence of the musk deer [*kasturi*] in the desolate heights, the musk pockets of which are only full in winter during the rutting period. The liquid extracted from these pockets is much used by local "doctors". All these bovidae and cervidae are called by a common generic name *pho*. In the village region, one finds small crabs (*kroẽ*), frogs (*pohgrõ*), toads (*pahdko*), lizards (*chepate*) [*chhepare*] as well as numerous snakes which only rarely attack men. The general term for snake is *puri* (or *puhri*) but each species has its own particular name. Thus pythons are called *kelohbai*. During the monsoon the woods are invaded by leeches (the small ones *tibe*, the large *tõbe*), snails and slugs (*kapo*). In the rivers at the bottom of the valley, one finds fish in abundance, but they are small in size. The generic name is *taṅa*.

There are many varieties of bird. For instance, there are three kinds of vulture which the Gurungs class as follows: the *nhalina-kroe* which eat the eyes, mouth and nose of cows which have died in the fields; after them come the *śe-kroe* which clean up all the carcass, and lastly the *rhibti-kroe* which eat the bones. They achieve this by carrying

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[2] It seems that the Nepali names, *ghoral*, *jharal*, *rate* (or *ratwa*), and *thar* refer to different animals according to the region (for example, the *ghoral* of one region being the *thar* of another). Thus, I am not sure that the scientific names that I have given are always exact. The reader can find precise descriptions of these animals in the numerous articles by HODGSON (bibliography given by LANDON, in *Nepal*, vol. I, Appendix XII, pp. 272-279) and in particular in:

- "The wild goat (Capra jharal) and the wild sheep (Ovis nayaur) of Nepal", *Asiatic Researches*, vol. XVIII, Part II (1833), pp. 129-138.
- "On the ratwa deer of Nepal (Cervus ratwa)", *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. XVIII, Part II (1833), pp. 139-149.
- "Letter on the distinction between the ghoral (Antilope ghoral, Hardw.) and thar (Antilope thar, Hodgson)", *Zool. Soc. Proc.*, vol. II (1834), pp. 85-87.

See also five articles in *J.A.S. of Bengal*, vol. I (1832), and vol. IV (1835), cf. my Bibliography.

them up one by one into the air, then letting them fall on the rocks where they break. The vultures then fly down and swallow the small pieces. The generic name for the birds of prey is *kroe* or rather, *kre*.

The falcon type birds, (buzzards, hawks), are numerous (*phelal-kroe*, *jure-kroe*). They glide tirelessly above the villages, suddenly swooping on hen and chicks. The bird of prey which eats snakes is called *papakuli*.

The smallest birds are generally called *name* (or *nhame*). One frequently finds green pigeons (*pē-kuku*), swallows (*chimli*), wrens (*pītli*), warblers, kingfishers, finches, fly-catchers, woodpeckers etc.

In the woods run pheasants (*dāphe* and *nak-śi* [*nausī*]). In the evening, small bats (*phõ-phõ*) swoop through the sky.

The insect world is very rich. It includes: the fly (*ñe-brõ*), louse (*śye*), spider (*timru-puce* [*timur buchhe*]), hornet with a black body and red head (*cyewe*), bee (*kohe*), bugs (*kopyā* and *naple*), green-fly (*mosõ*) and the mosquito (*tan*) [*machher*].

Finally, the domestic animals include: the ox (*kla* [*klya*]), cow (*meh*), buffalo (*magi*), goat (*ra*), sheep (*kyuh*), horse (*ta* [*ghora*]), chicken (*nakai*), dog (*naki*) and cat (*nawar*).

Later we will see the important role played by many of these animals in Gurung mythology.

e) *The upper valley of the Modi* (map, fig. 3).

As I have indicated, I stayed mainly in the region of the Modi, in the village of Mohoriyā (nep.) or Mohre (gur.).

This valley is at the extreme west of Gurung territory. It is fertile. Many of its villages are relatively new. It follows the general direction N.E-S.W., lying perpendicular to the Annapurna range. It is drained by the Modi river and its two principal tributaries, the Kihmrõ and Barudi, which flow down the western slopes. The Modi and its two tributaries resemble torrents rather than rivers. They fall steeply, their beds are filled with great rocks, and their waters are tumultuous and muddy. The valley is closed off to the north by one of the highest mountain ranges in the world, that of the Annapurnas, which reach more than 8,000 m. and which spread from east to west in a splendid group of four peaks.

Two slightly smaller mountains rise directly over the valley, the one to 7,080 m. to the west, the other to 6,900 m. to the east, called in Gurung *Katasū* (Macchapucchare nep.). Their summits are snow-covered all the year round. The western slopes of the valley reach more than 3,000 m., those to the east to 2,800 m. The climate varies from north to south. That of the north, at the village of Kōta for example, is harsh in winter. During the monsoon, Kōta is continually in cloud, which considerably retards the growth of the crops because of the cold and the lack of sunlight. There is a lag of between two weeks and one month in

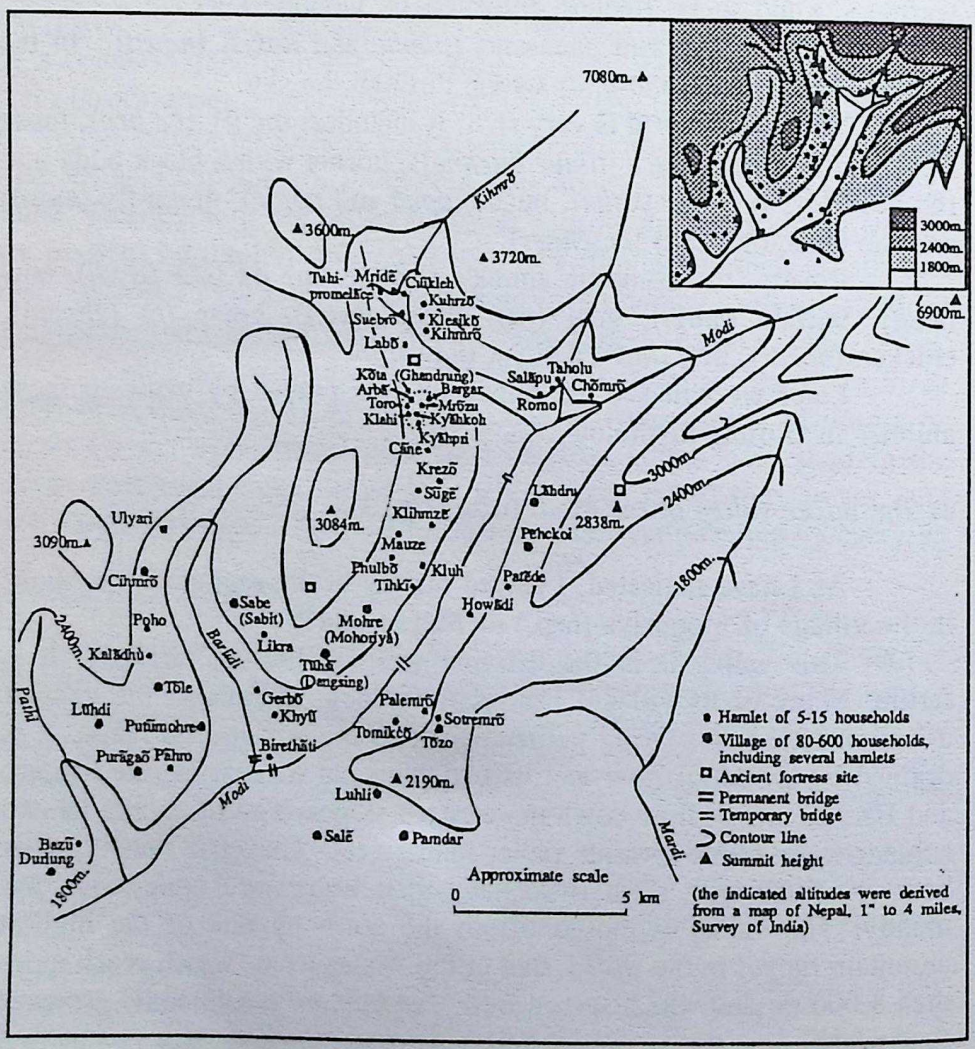

Figure 3 - The Upper Valley of the Modi

the agricultural activities of Kõta and of Mohoriya which, although it is not more than 7 km. as the crow flies to the south, has a much milder climate and less cloud. The latter village is less affected by the influence of disturbances caused by the presence of the very high valleys and mountains nearby.

The agriculture, the villages and the houses are adapted to the climatic conditions and this leads to the variations between villages in the same valley. Thus the houses of Kõta are stronger and better protected against the cold than those of Mohoriya, and the agriculture of the latter is more intensive than that of Kõta due to its milder climate. All the land under 2,400 m. is cultivated if the soil is not too stony or the slope too steep. Above, the forests extend to about 3,600 m., or the summer pastures, the thinly scattered bushes of which merge into the forest.

During the second half of the 19th century, the majority of the land below 2,400 m. was still covered with trees. Great herds of 200 to 300 cows and many thousands of sheep lived there. The Gurung economy was much more pastoral than nowadays (cf. ch. III and IV).

2. - The Inhabitants.

The country is almost exclusively peopled by Gurungs. One finds also several houses of Untouchables (who are the blacksmiths, tailors, goldsmiths, cobblers, agricultural labourers), and of Brahmins, Magars, Tamangs, Thakalis and Newars.

a) *General.*

The Gurungs are, with the Magars to the south, the two most important mountain peoples and the largest groups in the high hills of central Nepal. The census of 1952-54 indicated that the total number of persons speaking Gurung was 162,192, of which 149,554 lived in the central region which we described earlier. In studying the demography, we will comment on these figures and amend them.

The inhabitants are commonly called "Gurung" in Nepali (the *lingua franca* of Nepal). The derivation of the word *gurung* is shown in Nepalese legends to be from the word *guru*, one of the first Gurungs having been celebrated for his great wisdom and knowledge. Obviously this interpretation cannot be checked and seems fanciful. When the

Gurungs speak in their language, they do not use the word *gurung* but the word *tamu-mai* (*tamu*;[3] *mai*, people).

Mr. Kawakita [4] in his recent report on a journey which he made with a Japanese Himalayan expedition, gives the following facts. In a certain number of villages on the northern slopes of the Annapurnas, and along the Marsyangdi to the north of the high Himalayan range, the inhabitants call themselves *lama gurung* and call the Gurungs on the southern slopes the *co-gurung* or vegetarian Gurungs, that is to say the Hinduised Gurungs, who do not eat as many meats as the Tibetan populations. This is denied by the Gurungs of the south who call the *lama gurung* Bhotias, that is to say the inhabitants of Tibet. The descriptions given by Mr. Kawakita tend to prove that they are Tibetanised. Some words of Gurung vocabulary which Mr. Kawakita gives are different from those which I have noted and are, for the most part, Tibetan.[3]

Our study only relates to the Gurungs of the southern slopes of the Himalayas.

b) *Origins*.

It is impossible to reconstruct with certainty the history of the Gurungs. The local language is not written down so we do not have any Gurung document at our disposal. Several legends, written fairly recently it seems, in Nepali, try to reconstruct the origins of the Gurungs. I shall give here the main outlines and follow them with several historical facts.

A legend of the Rais and Limbus (inhabitants of the east of Nepal) describes the origin of the mountain populations of Nepal. A man coming from Tibet, *Munaiñuã*, had ten sons; one of them, *Gurupa*, was the ancestor of the Gurungs.

Other legends in Nepali link the origin of the Gurungs to the invasion of the Rajputs whose descendants founded the dynasty of the Thakurs reigning to this day in Nepal. One prince who belonged to the dynasty of the Surjes was meditating in the Himalayas, accompanied by

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[3] Cf. J. Burton PAGE.

[4] J. KAWAKITA, *Peoples of Nepal Himalaya*.

his wife, and by the family of his priest and that of his servant. They intermarried with the indigenous peoples. From these unions came the founders of the different Gurung clans.[4]

The Gurungs were formerly governed by the dynasty of the *ghale* whose descendants now form a Gurung clan. According to one legend, these *ghale* came from the northern slopes of the Himalayas and installed themselves on the southern slopes at Siklis, Ghandrung (Kōta), Lamjung and Gorkha; they governed the country until the arrival of princes from India. The marriages between the *ghale* and the original inhabitants resulted in the clans of contemporary Gurung society.

W. Brook Northey and C.J. Morris [5], using certain facts noted by Hamilton, Hodgson and Landon, attempted to reconstitute the conquest of west Nepal, and in particular the Gurung territory, by the Rajputs fleeing from Chitor after the capture of that town by the Mogul Emperor. The youngest son of Marmath, installed at Ujjain, reached Nepal. He seems to have settled at Riri or Ridi near to Palpa among the Magars; then he went towards Bhirkot to the east of Ridi. There he had two sons, Khanca and Minca. Then, when the elder began his conquest of Magar territory, Minca established his rule at Nowakot, Lamjung, and Tanhu, regions mainly inhabited by the Gurungs. One of his descendants, Jagdeva, who reigned towards the end of the 15th century at Nowakot, had seven sons. The eldest succeeded him. The second, Kalu Sah, became King of Lamjung but was soon assassinated. The inhabitants of the country, not having a king, asked Kulmandan, who governed Nowakot and Kaski, to give them another of his sons to become their King. The youngest, Yasabam, was chosen and ruled in the country of Lamjung. He had two sons. The elder inherited the throne while the younger left for the conquest of Gorkha which he occupied in 1559. The descendants of the latter left in the 18th century for the conquest of Kathmandu and became the Kings of Nepal, which dynasty rules to this day.[6] [APPENDIX J]

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[5] W. Brook NORTHEY and C.J. MORRIS, *The Gurkhas*, pp. 28 sq.

[6] S. LÉVI in *Le Nèpal*, vol. I, pp. 254-258, also cites the different legends which affirm that the ancestors of the Gorkha dynasty were the Rajputs of Chitor, but rightly doubts that they relate historical facts.

One can establish with certainty that the *ghale* kings who governed the Gurungs for a certain time had been overthrown by the beginning of the 15th century and that it was from that time that Gurung territory came under the influence of Hindu invaders coming from India. Furthermore, it is probable that before that date the infiltration by the latter had already begun.

Sir R.L. Turner writes[7] "It seems that the mongoloid populations (of which the Gurungs are part) came to Nepal comparatively recently, settled on the southern slopes of the Himalayas, and then mixed with an older indigenous population". The Gurungs certainly were part of a group of mongoloid stock coming from the north. Their physical traits (cf. photos, Pl. VI, etc.) indicate this clearly. The photos of the *lama Gurung* published by Mr. Kawakita show us people astonishingly like the Tibetans. That author also noted the existence of an ancient fortress which was occupied by the *ghale* kings before they travelled south. The Gurung women married with the invaders from the south, and perhaps with the indigenous people who lived before their arrival on the southern slopes of the Himalayas (many Gurungs have said to me that their ancestors found pre-existing populations when they settled in Nepal, particularly at Kōta). Thus the mongoloid features of the Gurungs have slightly softened to give us the present characteristics.

Culturally the Gurungs are very close to the Tibetan populations. Their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman group[8]. It has frequently been put into the category of non-pronominalised languages in contrast to those represented by the Newari. Shafer now classes it in the "Bodish" section. Numerous Gurung words are identical or very similar to the Tibetan equivalents, above all in the ancient mythical histories of the local priests *pucu* and *klihbrī* [*k-hhlyaprin*]. The formation of the verbs is nevertheless different. Although the Gurung language has changed a

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[7] In Brook NORTHEY and C.J. MORRIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 63 sq.

[8] TURNER, *loc. cit.*

- HODGSON, *Essays on the Language, Literature and Religion of Nepal*, Part II, p. 146.
- G. GRIERSON, *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. III, Part I, pp. 173 sq.
- R. SHAFER, "Classification of the Sino-Tibetan languages", *Word*, vol. II, 1955.
- J. Burton PAGE, "Two studies in Gurung-kura", *B.S.O.A.S.*, 1955, vol. XII, Part I, p. III.

good deal over the centuries, one can clearly discern its monosyllabic and tonal character [9].

The religion is deeply imbued with Tibetan beliefs. Pure lamaism is very widespread in all the country. At its fringes the beliefs of the *pucu* [*pa-chyu*] and *klihbrī* co-exist, which are composed of a mixture of lamaism and of the old religions common to the Tibetan and Himalayan populations.

A study of long genealogical lists of some important Gurung families shows how many of the ancient names were close to Tibetan names, whereas those which are adopted nowadays (in the third or fourth generations) have a Nepalese sound.[5]

c) *Gurungs and military life.*

Before undertaking the study of different aspects of the life of the Gurungs it is useful to draw the attention of the reader to the essential role which military life plays among the Gurungs. Some tens of thousands of men have served or are serving in the British and Indian armies. This massive exodus of soldiers has numerous consequences which we will try to show in the different chapters of our study.

In the description which follows, we will indicate the broad outlines of the history of Gurung mercenaries (and more generally of the "Gurkhas"). We will need to pose two questions. Why do the British and Indian armies recruit Gurung soldiers? What effect does these mercenaries serving abroad have on the Nepalese nation? The answers to these two questions will give us the opportunity to indicate precisely some essential traits of the Gurung character, and also the bonds which unite the Gurungs to the Nepalese nation.

We have thought it useful to give a certain amount of administrative information, perhaps of secondary interest, to help in the understanding of the following documents.

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[9] Cf. J. Burton PAGE, *loc. cit.*

- *Historical perception.*

Documents which relate the history of the Gurungs are so rare and imprecise that it is not possible to know exactly what military role these highland peoples played before the 17th century. However, one can suggest that their contribution, along with Magars, probably assured the establishment, in the west of Nepal, of the princes coming from India during the 12th or 13th centuries.

When in 1559 the little town of Gorkha (mid-west of Nepal) was attacked and overcome by Drabya Sah [10], it seems that Gurung soldiers took part in the siege. During the reign of Prithvi Narayan (1742-1774), they played an important part in the conquest of Nepal. At the time of the occupation of Nawakot and the valley of Kathmandu, Magars, Gurungs and Khas (born of marriages between Brahmins or Kshatriyas and Nepalese highland peoples) formed the majority of the invading troops. Afterwards the same army conquered the eastern regions of Nepal.

When the campaign ended, the Gurung veterans received lands in the country of the Rais and Limbus, to the east of Kathmandu. They settled there and married with the local populations.

During the 19th century the royal guard was mainly composed of Gurungs and Magars. The Kali Bahadur regiment was solely recruited from among the best Gurung soldiers. In the Kali Prasad regiment, Gurungs were in the majority. These regiments still exist, but Gurungs no longer predominate. They prefer to serve abroad. Previously, they were often commanded by Gurung officers. I have collected a long list of colonels who have distinguished themselves in the service of the King or the Prime Minister. Two of these officers, Natu [Nathu] and Parlat [Prahlad], have become legendary figures in popular Gurung tales.[6]

According to Landon, it was during the Nepalo-British war of 1814 that, for the first time, General Ochterlony, an English officer commanding the British troops, described the exceptional fighting qualities of the Nepalese troops.

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[10] LANDON, *Nepal*, vol. I., p. 50. - S. LÉVI, *loc. cit.*, vol. I,p. 245.

"As early as 1832, Hodgson indicated, in a celebrated report, the use that the Government of India could make of these valuable recruits; confined to Nepal, without employment or income, the warlike tribes could not fail to provoke an uprising; admitted into the Indian army, under the guidance of British officers, they would easily find the opportunity to satisfy their warlike desires to the advantage of England. It took eighteen years for Hodgson to triumph over the timorous spirits who refused to believe in the loyalty of the Gurkhas. In 1850, Lord Dalhousie authorised the formation of three regiments... Moreover, very recently the Gurkha contingent figured brilliantly among the troops in the China Expedition" [11].

After the fall of Delhi during the revolt of the Sepoys in 1857, Jang Bahadur, Prime Minister and absolute ruler of Nepal, sent first 3,000 and then 8,000 men to help crush the final resistance. S. Lévi indicated that in about 1900, 14,000 Gurkhas divided into 15 regiments served in the Indian army. According to Northey and Morris, 55,000 recruits fought alongside the British troops from 1914 to 1918. Landon reckoned that 200,000 Gurkhas served in India during the First World War. During this period Gurkhas were found in France, in England, at Salonica and throughout the Near-East. Many of the troops were afterwards discharged, but the Indian Army continued to recruit them. The second world war marked the high point in the history of the Gurkha soldiers. The fighting force of each regiment was tripled, quadrupled and even quintupled. The troops were mainly used on the Assam frontier and in Burma and formed 8% of the total fighting force of the Indian Army at the end of the war [12].

Important contingents took part in the Italian campaign (Monte Cassino). The year 1947 marked the beginning of a period of crisis for the Gurkhas. The independence of India was then proclaimed. The eleven Gurkha regiments were divided between Britain and India. In an agreement signed by the two countries, it was stated that the former should keep four regiments and the latter seven. Soldiers were free to opt for one or other of the two countries, who had separate recruitment

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[11] Sylvain LÉVI, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 292.

[12] Extract from *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, no. 390,vol. 2,258.

centres. A certain number of agreements were signed between the Governments of Nepal, the United Kingdom and India to limit the recruitment zones, the number of recruits, and to fix wages, etc. In two provinces neighbouring the Kathmandu Valley, recruitment is reserved for the Nepalese Army to prevent competition between this army and foreign armies. It was usual to call the soldiers from Nepal who served in the Indian Army, "Gurkhas". Gorkha is the name of the ruling Nepalese dynasty which has the same name as the little town of Gorkha from where Prithvi Narayan left for his conquest of Kathmandu. Originally the name "Gurkha" soldier was well chosen as almost all of the recruits, were Gurungs and Magars coming from the west of Nepal where Gorkha is situated. Later on recruitment was from among other Nepalese groups, Rais and Limbus in the east and Tamangs from the centre of Nepal. At present, recruits come from among the mongoloid highland peoples: Gurungs, Magars, Rais, Limbus, and Tamangs, who live mainly in the northern parts of Nepal. The recruiting officers do not wish to enlist Nepalese belonging to other groups.

- *Reasons for foreign recruitment.*

During the last hundred years, Britain and then India have never stopped their recruitment of Gurkhas. We have to ask the question, "Why do the British and Indian armies recruit Gurkha soldiers and in particular the Gurungs?".

It is difficult to establish what made the British Government decide to recruit troops in Nepal during the last century. It seems that Hodgson's report, which we summarised previously, gives one of the principal reasons for this decision: to the north of India lived a warlike peoples without employment who for want of such would be provoked into an uprising sooner or later. In its army, Britain could use them to its advantage and also avoid an armed conflict with Nepal. This must have been part of the reasoning behind the original decision. In addition, the 1857 mutiny had as a consequence the expansion of the recruitment of Gurkha troops who could not initiate a revolt like those where Brahmins were numerous. Later on, the British intensified their recruitment because they appreciated the great fighting qualities of the Gurkhas. Returning to our first question, what are the martial qualities of these peoples?

Not personally being in a position to judge the worth of the Gurungs as soldiers, I will cite several judgments of British officers who commanded Gurkha soldiers. Then I will try to elaborate further on the basis of my knowledge of the character of these soldiers when they are in their village. In general, the opinions differ little. The following are particularly representative:

General Woodyatt [13] speaks of the "cheerful humour of the Gurkhas and their hatred of injustice. They love games and admire those who are able and clever. They are very loyal (if they are well treated), capable of learning well if they are firmly controlled. They are not angered by punishment, even if it is severe, if it is deserved. They hate it when one is continually on their backs."

Landon, on the basis of the opinions of several officers writes: "The principal quality of the Gurkhas rests in their indefatigable attachment to the art of combat in itself, the ease with which they accept discipline and privation, and their capacity to rapidly make friends with Europeans"

Certain of these character traits are fair. The Gurungs are extremely hardy and inventive when they work in mountainous country. They can undergo long periods of deprivation and punishing effort without recrimination. Their youth has prepared them for such hardships. They hate an unjust remark and do not hide their disapproval. They are of a happy disposition and passionately love playing and joking in a group. They respect the particular aptitudes of a man, and try hard to learn through contact with him.

Landon speaks of the "ease with which they accept discipline". I think that this assertion is not correct for the Gurungs as a whole[14]. Certainly discipline exists among the Gurung soldiers, but it weighs heavily on them and they only obey because they have no alternative. Whether they be child or adult, the Gurung has a tendency to be undisciplined. The decisions taken by the assembly and the headman of the village are often infringed or only partially followed, although

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[13] WOODYATT, *Under Ten Viceroys*, p. 171.

[14] The remarks which follow are based mainly on observations made in the Modi Valley. Nevertheless, I think that one can generalize to Gurung country as a whole according to information that I have gathered elsewhere.

sanctions are used. When collective work is to be done, the village headman is obliged to go round several times to search for the villagers who have not shown their faces at the end of the count.

On the other hand, I believe I can add some qualities not mentioned in the preceding assessments which have caused the Gurungs to be appreciated in foreign armies. The Gurungs, and the highland groups in general, who serve in the Gurkha troops do not obey strict caste rules. This is extremely important when one understands the difficulties the British have had in organising their army to allow each Indian soldier to respect his caste rules, especially in the matter of food. The Gurung soldiers are not concerned to know who prepared their food and with whom they eat. They can eat anything except beef and pork. They do not have any precise notion of what is pure or impure. Such comportment, particularly until 1947, the date of Indian independence, was exceptional in that country and was appreciated by the British officers. Furthermore, the Gurungs adapt themselves very easily to new situations. They rapidly accustom themselves to a foreign culture and to military life, without undergoing a long period of disorientation. When a Gurung finds himself confronting a new problem, if the method he employs to resolve it proves ineffective, he does not give up, but immediately looks for another way of surmounting the obstacle. The flexibility of Gurung social organisation allows them this ease of adaptation even if it does not explain it, for the behaviour of a Gurung is not conditioned by a set of rigid rules. Also, one must add their frankness. The opinion of a Gurung is clearly expressed and exactly reflects his thoughts. He does not try to make up complicated stories to deceive people, and is easily irritated when he perceives that one setting a trap, or trying to hide the real motives for an action. He often reproaches the Brahmins who live in the lowlands for dissimulation.

- *Recruitment.*

The British and Indian armies offer respectively some advantages and some inconveniences which often affect the choice of a young recruit.

In the British Army, the Gurungs are stationed in Malaya, in Singapore, or Hong-Kong. When they are in Malaya the military training and the months of campaigning in the jungle are very exhausting, but are

interspersed by periods of rest at Penang or Singapore, where garrison life is much easier. Young recruits are mainly attracted to the British army because of the higher wages which soldiers receive. The lowest salary is the same for British and Indian troops, but the former receive in addition an overseas allowance which doubles their pay. Soldiers accompanied by their wives have the right to receive a family allowance at least as large as the overseas allowance. In the eyes of the Gurungs, the British Army presents two particular drawbacks: the climate of Malaya is very hot and humid and these highlanders suffer there. Also they find themselves submerged in a completely foreign culture. The Europeans, the Chinese, and the Malays of Singapore have very few contacts with them. The Gurungs have no common language with them and they are very isolated.

At the present time, many of the Gurung recruits serving in the Indian Army are in Kashmir or Assam, mountainous country where they find themselves in familiar surroundings and are capable of giving good service. In India, the Gurungs do not really feel themselves to be in a foreign land. Indian culture has considerably affected Nepal and even the mountain peoples have been exposed to its influence. All Gurungs are bilingual, and, knowing Nepali, it makes it easier to learn Hindi and to make themselves understood by the Indian populations who surround them, and to enjoy the local amusements. On the religious front, they easily adapt themselves to the beliefs and practices of popular religion in India. Often a Gurung soldier, or his wife, will take back to the village pictures showing scenes of Indian mythology which are later attached to the walls in the house. Then at certain religious ceremonies in the village, the men imitate the things that they have seen during their years in India.

In 1958, I was able to observe that British and Indian recruitment was heavily felt in Gurung country. The handful of young men who live in Mohoriya is almost exclusively composed of those suffering from tuberculosis, the lame, those with rickets and other abnormalities. Certainly, it is a limited case, but it shows to what extent mercenary soldiering can weaken the population of a Gurung village.

The young men leave for the army between the ages of 18 and 20 years. Some enlist in the "Boys" where, from the age of 15, they receive an education for two or three years. Then they start their military training. Good teaching allows them to rise very rapidly in rank.

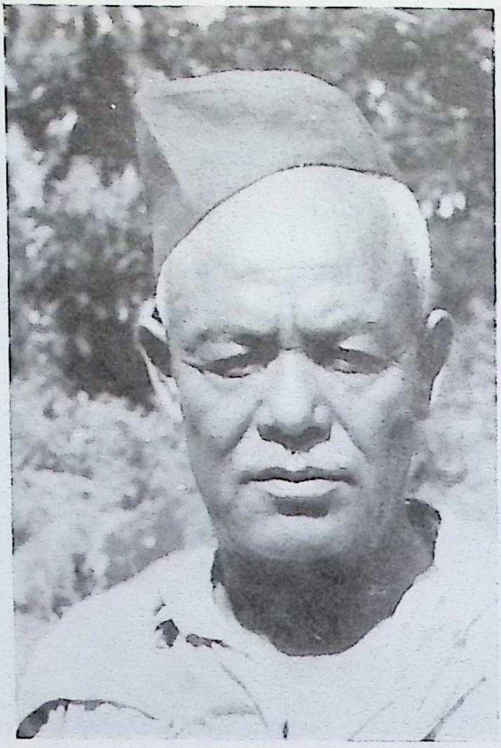
A soldier signs a contract for three years renewable for a further three years after six months leave. He may leave the army when he likes, but has no right to a pension until after 15 years of service. The young recruit must attend one of the recruiting centres at his own cost. For the western part of Nepal, the centres are in the Terai or in India near to the Nepal-India frontier. From time to time, British and Indian officers travel through the valleys of the Gurung area to visit the country of their erstwhile soldiers. In each village through which they pass they are feted and given very extensive hospitality. They use these visits to sound out the possibilities of recruiting in this or that village and listen to comments of retired soldiers or those on leave about the problems they have found. But probably the best "recruiting sergeants" are the Gurung soldiers themselves when they return to their natal villages.[7]

- *Ties binding the Gurung mercenary to the nation.*

With the enlistment of tens of thousands of men in foreign armies, the Gurungs have created an exceptional situation in the centre of Nepal. In Mohoriya, six soldiers out of ninety-three are serving in the Nepalese Army. This is general: they hardly ever enlist in the national army but very often join foreign forces. This tendency is even more prevalent in the last twenty years. The six cases in Mohoriya are those of soldiers no longer in service. At present, no man has left the village to serve in the Nepalese Army. The Gurungs, like all mercenaries, offer their services to the armies of foreign powers in return for money. The Nepalese Government accepts the principle of the mercenary. However, the Nepalese are only permitted to enlist in the British and Indian armies, that is in the armies of allied countries with whom Nepal has signed special agreements on the subject. Furthermore, Nepal has clearly shown its alliance with Britain during the two World Wars. Not only has it permitted numerous Nepalese to enlist in the British forces, but has also provided these troops with an appreciable amount of material aid. Landon evaluated this aid at 450,000 Indian rupees from the Government of Nepal to supply the troops between 1914 and 1918. Nepal has a small regular army. Compulsory military service does not exist. But it is not this army which represents the true military potential of Nepal. That resides mainly in the Gurkha soldiers who have served in foreign armies

6. Terraced rice fields.

7. Rice plants before transplantation.



8. Gurung of Dangsing.

9. *Sarki* of Dangsing

10. Gurung of Ghalegaõ

11. 12.

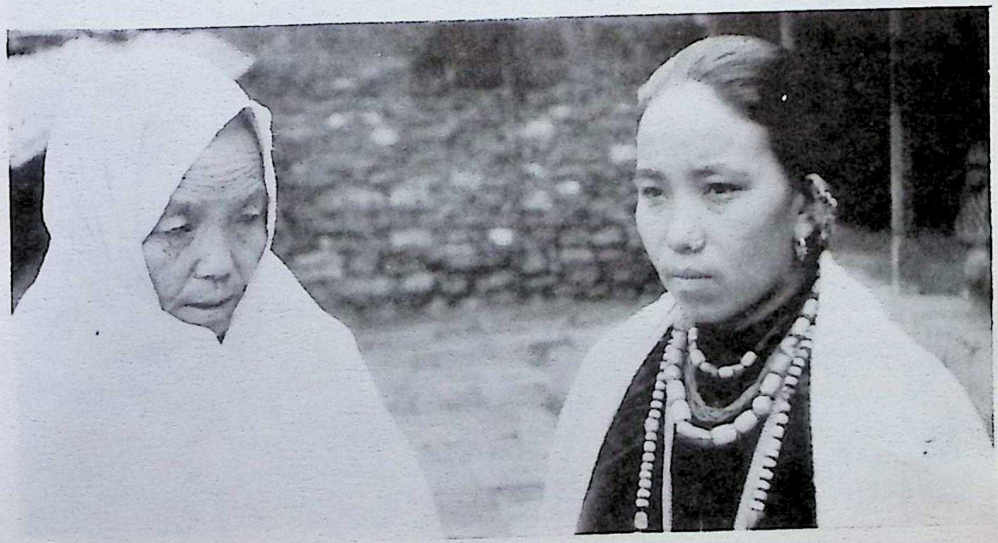
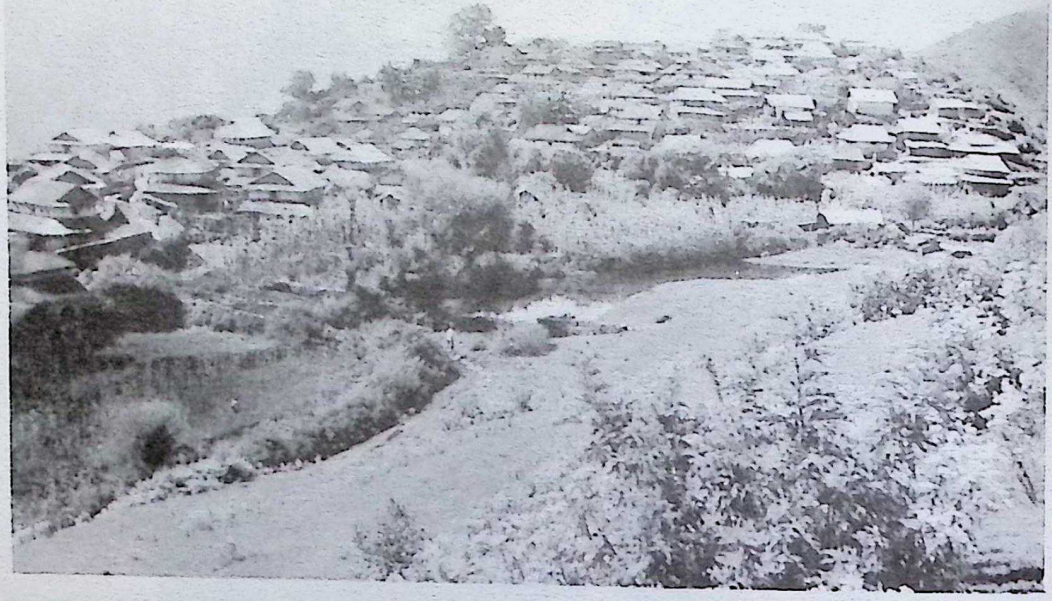
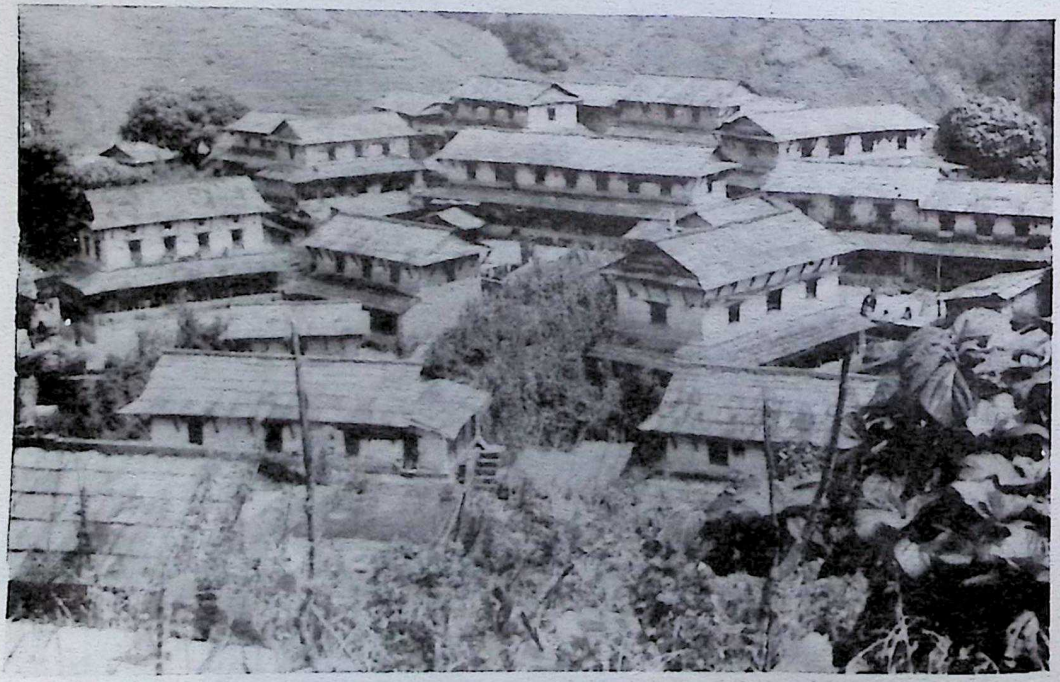


PLATE VIII

Villages



14. Ghalegaõ



15. Kõta

and who could be easily mobilised, in case of need, to contribute effectively in the defence of their country.

When a Gurung signs on in the Indian or British Army he obviously does not do it in a patriotic spirit. He is nevertheless loyal to the country which employs him and has proved this on many occasions. He enrols in an army to satisfy his personal tastes and to make a material profit. When I asked old soldiers of the Nepalese army why they had enlisted, they gave me many answers but did not ever indicate that they had been moved by patriotism. Furthermore, the Gurung has no clear idea of patriotism. I believe that such a spirit mainly engendered by contact with danger, when all the inhabitants of a community find themselves in the same peril. But, for more than two centuries, the Gurungs have not experienced this situation directly, and have continued to consider themselves before everything else as members of the Gurung community. Nepal has fought Tibet and then Britain. But in neither case did the war take place in Gurung territory; the war against the British took place far away, in the Terai. Patriotism and nationalism have only started to develop among the younger generation of Gurungs. The Gurungs are becoming citizens of Nepal [15].

For the last few years, governmental action has tended to touch all the villages in the nation. Political parties extend their influence. Books, newspapers and radio make them aware of the fact that the Nepalese nation is one peoples who face common dangers.

We have previously spoken of the important role which the Gurung troops played in the conquest of Nepal by Prithvi Narayan. In this way they acquired prestige in the eyes of the ruling classes, and similarly in the 19th century. Mercenary soldiering has also enabled the Gurungs to play an active part in national affairs. Certain of those who have been promoted to the rank of officer in the Indian and British armies now collaborate in the government of the country. Their sons go to study in the universities of Kathmandu or Patna. For several years, a

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[15] D.L. SNELLGROVE writes on this subject: "Although these people, (Newars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Sherpas and all others who live within political Nepal) know very well who are their rulers, there is yet no consciousness of common citizenship. Nor would one expect to find it in communities so scattered and diversified. To them Nepal still means, as it always used to, only the central valley. It never embraces as a single concept the Nepal marked on our maps". (*Buddhist Himalaya*, p. 93).

political party, the "Gurkha Parishad", has tried to defend the interests of the Gurungs and the other mercenary groups, Magars, Rais, Limbus etc. in the Government of Nepal.[8] Thanks to their good education, the Gurungs have acquired a certain political awareness, but lack of information often prevents them from arriving at any very useful conclusions. When I arrived in the village with my friend Chandra Bahadur, the latter was assailed with questions on the recent political developments, elections, reforms...., and long discussions followed.

B. THE VILLAGE OF MOHORIYA.

I. - Definition of "village".

The Gurungs speak of their country as the "*tamu-mai hyula*" (*yul*: country, tib.) "the country of the Gurungs", that is to say the country inhabited by the Gurungs.

It is a territory which includes an overwhelming majority of Gurungs. They are in some ways the masters of all this country, whilst acknowledging the authority of the Thakuri kings (*thakuri*, nep.) of Nepal since the fall of their *ghale* kings. Several smaller groups live in their shadow. For example, this is very clear if one considers the position of the little hamlets of Brahmins who find themselves inside Gurung districts. They are very poor and their inhabitants work as day labourers or share-croppers for the Gurungs of neighbouring villages. Occasionally, one or other of them is consulted by a Gurung to make a horoscope, or to fix the date of a marriage. But, as the Gurungs are only superficially Hinduised, the brahmin only plays a minor role as a priest. His inferior economic position is not compensated for by the prestige habitually accorded to his role as a high caste priest.[9]

The Gurung country has no proper internal organisation. One speaks of the region of Lamjung where the Gurungs and the *ghale* kings were for a long time very powerful, the region of Siklis, of Ghandrung, and of Kaski where other *ghale* kings ruled. But these regions are not clearly distinct and do not correspond (or do not correspond much) with the organisation of territorial units. Certainly, the Nepalese Government has created a system of provinces, districts etc. but the divisions are

artificial, cutting the valleys by following the course of rivers, or uniting villages occupied by different groups.

The only Gurung territorial unit is the village. The Gurung vocabulary is vague on this subject. The only word used is *nasa* (tib. *gnas*: place); a hamlet formed of several houses is called *nasa*; a village, a group of 80 to 150 houses, is also called *nasa*; a large agglomeration, a group of 400 to 600 houses (*the-ba nasa*: big village), perhaps, in certain cases divided into several *nasa* of 100 to 150 houses. The word *nasa* can therefore be translated as a "more or less important grouping of houses".

Let us see if the administrative organisation of the agglomeration can clarify the matter at all. The lands of a certain number of houses (*tōh*) are united under the authority of one or several headmen, *krōh*, who each independently of the others, is the representative of the Nepalese Government in the settlement. Let us take as an example the village of Dangsing. It is composed of a single group of about 120 houses, established on a clearly delimited area. There are two *krōh* and each has under his authority a certain number of houses, one at the bottom, the other at the top of the village; but these do not form the only grouping of houses. These two areas, the one "at the bottom" and the other "at the top" resemble the districts of a borough. Each *krōh* raises taxes, administers justice, sees that national laws are obeyed, etc. in the district where he is in charge. But the local regulations applying to the whole village are worked out by the two *krōh* together or by a general assembly of the two "districts" of the village. Thus, for local regulations, the village is seen as only one place, although it is divided for the administration of Government laws. The land is not explicitly divided between the two districts of the village; for instance, an inhabitant of the lower part can sell his land to an inhabitant of the higher part and thus put his land under the jurisdiction of another *krōh*. On the other hand, land sold to a peasant living in a village other than Dangsing remains under the jurisdiction of the *krōh* of the seller's village. The woods and high pastures are indivisible.

Although this is not a rule, a *krōh* has at least 50 houses under his authority. These houses can be grouped with those of another district of a village. They can also include one or two little hamlets of 10 or 15 houses completely separated from the main village but always part of that one territorial unit. Let us take as an example the large territorial unit of

Kõta (*Ghandrung*, nep.). It includes a main village of 400 (?) houses and about twenty hamlets of five to twenty houses totalling 200 (?) houses. Seven *krõh* live in the main village which is divided into seven districts: *arbẽ - toro - klãhĩ - kyãhpri - kyãhkoh - mroju - bargar*. The seven *krõh* also divide the houses of the neighbouring hamlets between them.[10]

In defining the village in view of what follows, I have not taken into consideration the fact that the territorial unit can be indirectly divided between several *krõh*; in other words, I have not linked it to the authority of the headmen. The village is formed from a certain group of houses (the number can vary from 50 to 600, though usually it is between 80 and 100) in which the inhabitants enjoy the right to exploit the soil to a limit clearly fixed by the Nepalese administration. For convenience we will call a little group of five to ten houses forming part of a village a "hamlet", though this is not distinguished in local terminology. In the particular cases which I will discuss I will try where possible to indicate if the village has one or more *krõh*, showing indirectly whether the village comprises a small or large settlement of houses.

2. - Population.

a) *General demography.*

Before studying the population of Mohoriya, I will say a few words on Gurung demography in general.

The first systematic census of the population of Nepal took place from 1952 to 1954 [16]. It estimated the Nepalese population at 8,445,000 in 1954 (*Census*, p. XVII).

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[16] *Census of Population - Nepal 1952-54 A.D.*, Department of Statistics, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1958.

GURUNG SPEAKING GROUPS (*Census*, p. 44).

Eastern highland region	9,147
Terai - eastern interior	13
Terai - eastern	233
Kathmandu valley	505
Western highland region	149,554
Terai - central interior	2,511
Terai - western interior	30
Terai - middle western	189
Terai - western exterior	10
Nepal (Total)	162,192

Certain comments are needed to interpret these figures. No investigation has been undertaken to establish the importance of the various ethnic groups in Nepal. The only information which enables us to give an idea of the numerical importance of the Gurung population is the statistic giving the number of Nepalese inhabitants speaking the Gurung language. This shows that approximately 93% of them are found in the highland region to the west of the Kathmandu valley, including the Gurung country which we have previously studied. It is impossible for me to say precisely whether the figure of 149,554 inhabitants speaking Gurung in this region is very close to the number of persons belonging to the Gurung group, but it seems to me that the two figures would be very similar. In contrast, in the eastern part of Nepal the situation is very different. The existence of a little colony of 9,147 people speaking Gurung is due to the fact that at the time of the conquest of Nepal by the Gorkha dynasty, most of the army was made up of Gurungs and Magars. These troops were involved in the conquest of eastern Nepal and, when the campaign ended, a certain number of the soldiers received lands situated in the conquered region from the king under whom they had served. They did not return to their native land, but settled on the lands given to them by the king. For two centuries these men and their descendants have lived cut off from Gurung country, marrying with indigenous women, Rais, Limbus and others. Many of them still speak "Gurung" between themselves but they are no longer part of the Gurung cultural group. A large number do not speak their ancestral language

well, although they know their Gurung origins. The figure of 9,147 given by the census does not give any idea of the importance of the Gurung population in eastern Nepal. Furthermore, this population is very mixed as a consequence of the numerous marriages contracted with other indigenous peoples, and very scattered. There is no purely Gurung village in this region. This remark is equally true for all the regions of Nepal outside the "Gurung country" that we have previously described. The numbers in the census do not include the Gurungs absent from Nepal for six months or more (*Census*, p. v). However, many adult men have enlisted in the British and Indian armies and have been away for several years. It is therefore necessary to increase the figure of 149,554 given for the western highland region in order to obtain the actual total of the Gurung population. In fact, the majority of the soldiers return to their villages at the end of their service. Nevertheless, a small number establish themselves in India and never return to Nepal.

The *Linguistic Survey of India* [17] indicates that 7,481 persons spoke Gurung in India in 1904.

b) *The demography of the village of Mohoriya.*

I have not found any figure for the population of Mohoriya in the census of 1952-54, as it was grouped with that of the neighbouring village to the south, called Dangsing.

My census indicated a population of 496 inhabitants in June 1958. This number included:

1. The inhabitants present in the village at that date;
2. Soldiers, accompanied in certain cases by their wives, serving abroad.
3. Families who had settled in Indian for several years, but whose situation did not indicate for certain that they would not return one day to the village.
4. Young male children living in a village other than Mohoriya with their divorced mother, but whose father lived in Mohoriya. In fact, many of these children will return to their paternal village when they are older, for they retain their right of inheritance from their father, while

[17] Vol. III, Part II, p. 177.

they only enjoy this right from their mother's second husband, if she remarries, in the case where this husband decides to adopt them. Even in this case, they keep their right to the paternal inheritance. At the present time there are no male children in Mohoriya whose father lives in another village.

TABLE OF THE POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS

	MALE			FEMALE		
AGE GROUP	NON GURUNG	GURUNG	TOTAL	NON GURUNG	GURUNG	TOTAL
0 to 5	9	31	40	11	30	41
6 to 10	5	22	27	8	17	25
11 to 15	4	17	21	3	16	19
16 to 18	2	9	11	1	8	9
19 to 20	1	3	4	2	11	13
21 to 25	6	21	27	2	27	29
26 to 30	3	24	27	5	14	19
31 to 35	3	18	21	3	10	13
36 to 40	4	11	15		13	13
41 to 45		10	10		10	10
46 to 50	2	7	9		9	9
51 to 55	2	9	11		9	9
56 to 60		12	12		9	9
61 to 65	1	6	7		6	6
66 to 70		5	5		3	3
71 to 75		4	4		1	1
76 to 80		2	2		2	2
81 to 85		2	2	1	1	2
TOTAL	42	213	225	36	196	232

Among this population of 496 inhabitants, I have been able to establish almost precisely the age of 487 among them. On the other hand I overlooked the ages of five adults (three men and two women) and of four male children of less than 19 years. It is easy enough to obtain the age of a Gurung. In fact, he can nearly always calculate the number of years separating the year of his birth from the present year. Thus one obtains ages with a maximum error of one year plus or minus.

We have divided the population into Gurungs and non-Gurungs. Among the Gurungs we have included the "Ghartis", ancient slaves who have intermarried for many years with the Gurungs and little by little abandoned the name of Gharti to take that of Gurung, settling themselves among the Gurung community whose culture they share.

There is one Gharti family in Mohoriya. The same comment could be made for a Magar family that has been adopted by the Gurung community. The non-Gurungs are composed of 14 families of Untouchables and one Brahmin family.

The Gurung population consists of 418 inhabitants, including those whose age I do not have, and comprises nearly 85% of the total population. The non-Gurungs number 78 inhabitants.

We may trace the age pyramid (fig.4).

In that which follows, we will only deal with the Gurung population.

As our statistics are only based on 418 inhabitants, our conclusions can only be tentative. Nevertheless, while the figures clearly show certain peculiarities, they are confirmed by other villages that I have visited, and I will detail the consequences that ensue. The female population consists of 198 persons. The male population consists of 220 persons. There are, therefore, more men than women. I have been able to note this fact in all the Gurung country. It is fairly certain, as our statistics show, that the male and female births are equal in number. But female mortality is higher than among the males. In all the villages one encounters more men than women in the under 65 age group.[11] It seems that infant mortality among girls is higher than among boys. But above all women die in childbirth, medical facilities being nonexistent and hygiene very bad.

Even though it is rare for a young woman not to remarry after the death of her husband, it is more common to find men who remain widowed after losing their wife during childbirth. Village life does not seem to suffer from the shortage of women. In fact, this is compensated for by the absence of a large number of men who are soldiers abroad. Among them, are an appreciable number of celibates and widowers and therefore almost all the men living in the village can easily find a wife to marry or remarry.

It has seemed preferable to draw a second pyramid (fig. 5) by ten year age groups to compensate for the errors caused by mistaken

informants and to take into account that we are only dealing with 409 cases. It is mainly this second pyramid which we will now look at.

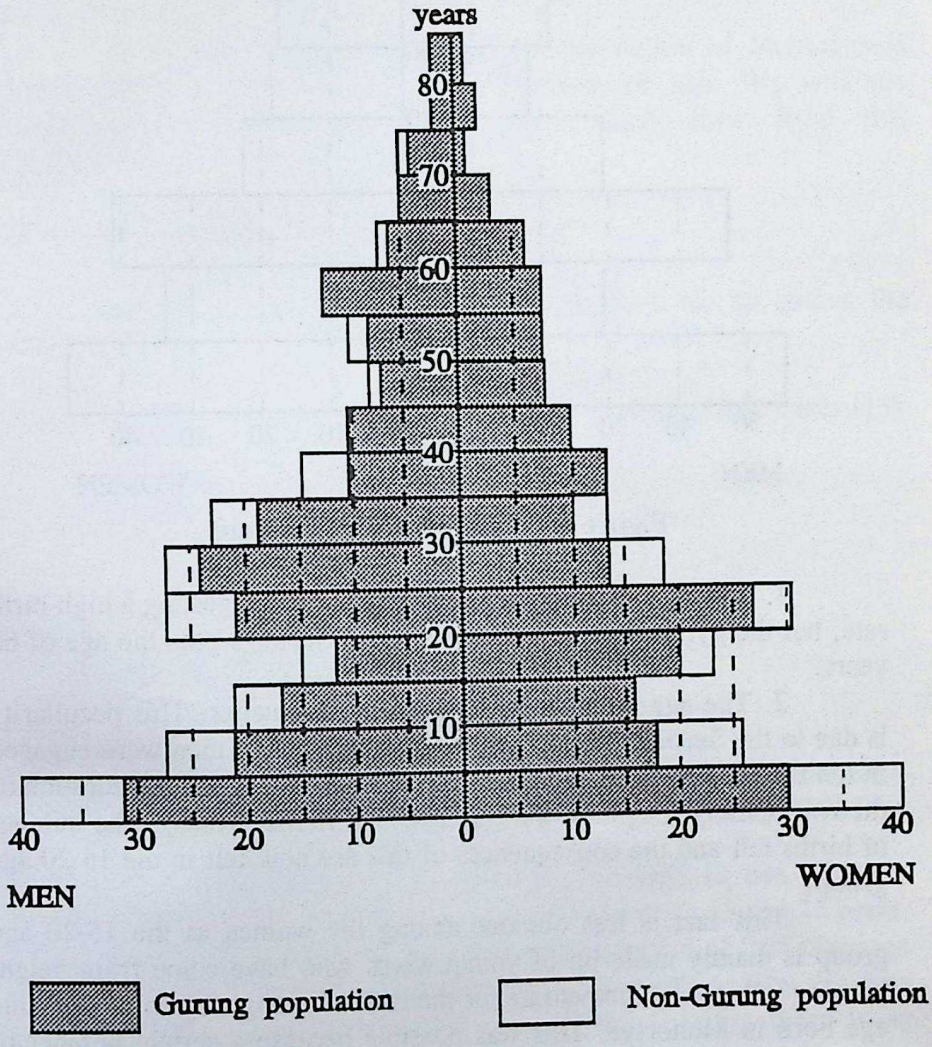

Figure 4 - Age Pyramid of the Gurungs of Mohoriya

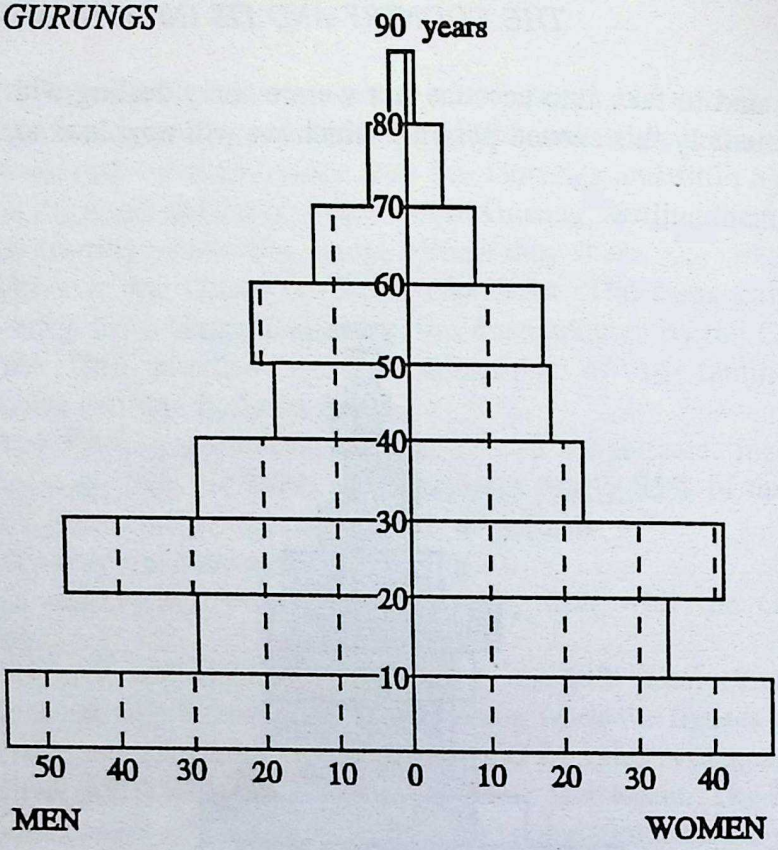

Figure 5 - Simplified Age Pyramid

1. The base of the pyramid is very large, suggesting a high birth rate, but the pyramid rapidly narrows. Few Gurungs pass the age of 60 years.

2. The age-group from 10-20 is much smaller. This peculiarity is due to the Second World War. A great number of men were engaged in the British Army and did not return to their village for the duration of the war. (Many fought on the Burmese and Italian fronts). The number of births fell and the consequences of this are now felt in the 15-20 age group.

This fact is less obvious among the women as the 15-20 age group is mainly made up of young wives who have come from neighbouring villages to compensate for the lack of young women of the same age born in Mohoriya. This was possible because a certain number of villages in the valley were less affected by recruitment than Mohoriya and did not suffer a fall in births of the same magnitude.

3. Mortality becomes very high above 30 years, especially among women. As we have already remarked, many of these die in childbirth after having given birth to two or three children.

4. Men between 40 and 50 years are a little less numerous than those between 50 and 60, which is explained by the drop in births occasioned by the massive exodus of Gurungs fighting for the British during the First World War.

To conclude, we can see that the population of Mohoriya is young, 60% of them are less than 30 years of age. We will see throughout our study the consequences which flow from this situation.[12]

- *Birth and fecundity.*

My short stay in Mohoriya only enabled me to gather the following facts:

AGE OF MOTHER AT THE FIRST BIRTH - study of 102 cases.[13]

Age Group	Number of cases
15 to 18	15
19 to 22	47
23 to 26	27
27 to 30	13

1. The age-range for giving birth is very clearly marked. It is between 15 and 30 years. A Gurung girl does not marry as young as a Brahmin, Chetri or Untouchable.

2. Most of the births are registered between 19 and 26 years (73%). However, 87% of first marriages occur between 15 and 22 years. Therefore there is a very clear gap between the period of first marriage and the birth of the first child which cannot be explained by the nine month period of pregnancy. In the case of the Gurungs there is an explanation. Many young men get married when they come on leave for five or six months after their first three year term in a foreign army. The sexual contacts that a young husband has with his wife are few during

the two or three months that the young couple live under the same roof. A reciprocal feeling of shyness separates them. It often happens that the young soldier leaves for a further three years abroad without his wife becoming pregnant. She must wait for three years before having another chance to become pregnant. This fact is very important and full of consequences. As we will show further on, the young woman must impose herself on her husband's house. The birth of a baby affirms her position in relation to her parents-in-law, and gives her rights and a certain amount of authority. If she does not have a child, she spends the three years which follow the departure of her young husband under the protection of her parents-in-law, assisting them as a servant whilst having a very poor emotional life. I know of several cases where this situation brought about the break-up of the marriage. Perhaps the young wife, finding herself unhappy in her new existence, will decide to return to her parents, or perhaps she will find herself another man and will ask for a divorce so that she can marry him.

3. The upper limit of first births is set a little below 30 years. This accords with the information gathered on the age of first marriage. All the women who should marry are married before 26 years of age. Only 3% of marriages occur above this limit. The gap between 26 and 30 years can be explained in a certain measure by the reasons given above and do not represent a disagreement between the two statistics.

According to the following table, the majority of births (88%) occur in the group aged between 19 and 38 years. Thus the menopause seems to occur quite early. The Gurungs find abortion repugnant.[14]

AGE OF MOTHER WHEN SHE GIVES BIRTH TO A CHILD.
A study of 396 cases.

Age group	number of cases
15 to 18	19
19 to 22	84
23 to 26	89
27 to 30	82
31 to 34	60
35 to 38	37
39 to 42	13
43 to 46	8
47 to 50	2
51 to 54	1
55 to 58	1

The number of births is greatest between the ages of 19 and 30 years. If we compare this statistic with that which gives the age of the mother at the first birth, it is clear that many of the women have given birth to three or four children before reaching the age of 30. The study of particular cases shows us the periodicity of births. Three or four years separate each pregnancy. This interval corresponds to the time during which the soldier husband is absent, the military contracts lasting for three years. This fact has as a consequence the slowing down of births, and prevents a woman of 21 from already having three children, as occurs among the families of Untouchables in Mohoriya or in the Nepalese Terai. Perhaps this is one of the factors which explains why the Gurung women in general live longer than those in the lowlands where the husbands are not recruited into foreign armies. The mother can rest and strengthen herself between each pregnancy. She can also give more time to each of her children during their early years. The majority of them are not weaned until they are three or four years old, that is to say when the mother has a new child. This analysis was based on 102 mothers who had 396 infants. Many of them can still have children. On

the other hand, we have not included the women who are sterile. Therefore the least that we can say is that each mother on average has no fewer than four pregnancies.

I have found a certain number of cases of sterility among women, which often leads to the break-up of a marriage. The only case of bigamy (extremely rare otherwise) which I encountered was caused by the sterility of the first wife.

- *Mortality.*

As with births, it has not been possible for me to establish a coefficient of mortality. On the other hand, I have been able to note that among the 380 last children who were born in Mohoriya, 70% reached the age of 17 years, a mortality of 30% during the first 17 years. Mortality is very high in Gurung country.[15] The lack of hygiene brings about the death of many babies at birth and during the first two years of life. I have observed a large number of fatal cases of chronic dysentery. It seems that mortality was much higher among the poorer families. As we will see later, the comfortably off and wealthy families mainly belong to certain clans. Infant mortality being less common among them, these families and hence these clans have a tendency to develop numerically more quickly than the others.

I will leave the statistical study of marriage and divorce until the general chapter on marriage, as it will be easier to explain there. I will do the same with the statistical study of the economic status of the population which will be found in relevant chapters.

- *Temporarily absent inhabitants.*

A large number of men from Mohoriya go abroad (India, Malaya) either to serve in the British and Indian armies, or to work in Indian businesses.

In Mohoriya 93 men are, or have been, soldiers. The male population between 19 and 85 years adds up to 134 persons. Thus 70% of them have known military life.

The following is a table summarising the army status of these 93 men.

Rank	Sepoy			L.N.K.		Havildar			Sub'd		Capt.	
Army	I	B	N	I	B	I	B	N	I	N	I	B
Serving soldier	19	9	-	5	4	5	1	-	2	-	-	-
Ex-soldier	29	3	3	3	-	5	-	1	1	1	1	1

I : Indian Army
B : British Army
N : Nepalese Army

L.N.K. : Corporal
Havildar : Lance Corporal
Subedar or Subadhar : Sergeant
Subedar Major : Sergeant Major
Captain : Commissioned Officer or full Captain as opposed to "Gurkha Captain" which is an honorific title given to a Sergeant Major in the British Army.[16]

Of the 35 ex-soldier who have been Sepoys:
- 13 have a pension and live in Mohoriya.
- 3 were discharged and 19 left before serving the full 15 years.

Of the 22 ex-soldiers without a pension:
- 14 live in Mohoriya.
- 8 work in India or in the Terai in the civil sector.

Of the 3 L.N.K.:
- 1 has a pension and lives in Mohoriya.
- 2 left before serving the full 15 years and live in Mohoriya.

Of the 6 Havildars:
- 5 have pensions and live in Mohoriya.
- 1 left before completing 15 years and works in the Terai.

Of the 2 Subedars:
- Both have pensions and live in Mohoriya.

Of the 2 Captains:
- Both have pensions and live in Mohoriya.

This statistic shows that a greater number of soldiers have served in the Indian Army than in the British Army. This requires some

explanation. The British Army has only recruited soldiers since 1947 and only for four regiments. Under "Indian Army" I have included the soldiers who served in India at the time of the British occupation and those who have served there since independence (29 Sepoys are veterans of the Indian Army as opposed to three for the British Army).

Although the statistics only include 93 cases, several salient features emerge (however I have been able to check these further in other Gurung villages). A retired Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer generally returns to live the rest of his life in the village of his birth. The majority have served from 15 to 30 years and rarely leave the army without a pension, as they can only become a Havildar after 10 or 15 years of service. When a soldier is a Havildar, a Subedar or Captain, his pay is increased which enables him to save an appreciable portion of it. When he retires with a substantial pension, he is not forced to look for work in India and prefers to end his life comfortably in his village, where his savings, often invested, assure him of an easy existence. In contrast, a Sepoy often leaves the army before serving 15 years. 60% of the ex-Sepoys from Mohoriya have resigned without the right to a pension, the majority at the end of their second or third three year contract. Few men agree to leave the army after 12 years of service for they deprive themselves of a pension when they have nearly reached the 15 years necessary. They are often promoted to a superior rank during that period of three years, and this prospect persuades them to sign a last engagement.

Years of Active Service	Number of Sepoys who have left the army
after 3 years	2
after 6 years	7
after 9 years	8
after 12 years	2

Nevertheless, certain Sepoys resign. Among the 19 Sepoys who have chosen not to continue with a military career, eight did not return to work in the village. I cannot say that they have cut all the ties which bind them to it. Certain of them only stay abroad for a time and return

to spend their old age in their place of birth. Later we will try to analyse the reasons which persuade a Sepoy (a simple soldier) who has resigned, not to return to his village, although almost all the Sepoys, Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers with pensions return there as soon as they have finished their time.

- *Demographic disequilibrium.*

In 1958, 53% of the men aged from 19 to 45 years served in the British or Indian armies, 9% worked as civilians abroad. Thus 62% of the men aged from 19 to 45 years were absent from the village. Twenty of the twenty-four young men between the age of 19 and 25 were soldiers. The four remaining were unsuitable for army service. Finally it should be added that ten young women lived abroad with their husbands.

We are thus seeing a society that is demographically in disequilibrium, composed of children, women, old men and a small number of men over 30. The village community has been forced to transform itself to lessen a disequilibrium which was tending to make the exploitation of the village lands impossible. The age group of workers has widened. Children and old men actively participate in the domestic work and agriculture. The women spend more time in the fields than formerly. The villagers have been forced use non-Gurung labourers. These workers belong to the Untouchable castes of Blacksmiths, Tailors, Cobblers, etc. (we will specify the meaning of these words later on). During the last two generations, the number of Untouchable families in Mohoriya has noticeably increased without a change in the area of the poor lands that they possess. One third of the Untouchable families has only been in the village for 20 years. The Untouchables can supply the male man-power needed because they are not mercenaries. Thus the Untouchables are more indispensable than formerly. They were, and remain, the only people to work with iron, gold, silver, and leather. But they are also agricultural workers who insure the exploitation of the Gurung land. They often haggle before agreeing to work for a Gurung and demand favours or try to get a little more grain as payment for their work. When I needed them as porters, they bargained for a long time before agreeing to carry my equipment because they knew that I could not find any Gurung porter.

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c) *Non-Gurung population.*

We have included under this heading the Brahmins and Untouchables living at Mohoriya. Some Brahmins live in Gurung territory, most often in small communities of several houses isolated from the Gurung settlements. One Brahmin family lives in Mohoriya. It is composed of three members: an old woman and her two sons aged more than 40 years. They live to the west of the village in a poor hovel built in the middle of the fields. The two men are herdsmen and day labourers for two Gurung families. They live more or less outside the Gurung community and in extreme poverty. As we have already noted, a constant feature is the poverty of the Brahmins who depend on the Gurungs for their subsistence. In contrast, the Untouchable community plays a much more important role and is very closely intermeshed with the Gurung population. The name "Untouchable" applies to all persons who can pollute a Gurung by touching him. The Gurung language does not have any general term signifying "Untouchable". The Gurungs use the words *kami*, *sarki* (Blacksmith, Cobbler) which are common to all the Nepalese groups. In the description which follows, I will use the word "untouchable" indiscriminately to cover Blacksmiths, Cobblers, Tailors, etc. The Untouchable is a man who must not touch a Gurung.

There are 14 houses of Untouchables inhabited by 75 persons of whom 50% are under 15 years of age. They are situated outside the village, in two groups, the one to the north-east, composed of eight houses, the other to the west, composed of six houses. The first group is inhabited by *damai* "Tailors" and by the *kami* "Blacksmiths" grouped a little apart from the *damai*. These *kami* are the members of two lineages, that of the *sunceri* and that of the *gotane*. In the second group live the *sunwar* "Goldsmiths".

The houses of the Untouchables in this area, form a community apart from the village. On the other hand, they are grouped by category, each inhabiting an area clearly separated from the others. This tendency to segregation is found in many villages. It is impossible to be certain at which period the Untouchables came into contact with the Gurungs. The latter regard them in the general Nepalese manner, knowing that they must avoid contact so as not to become polluted by them.

All the ceremonies of the lamas, *pucu* and *klihbrī* are done without the involvement of Untouchables to whom they are totally alien.

On the other hand, the Untouchables are asked to participate in the ceremonies of a Hindu character. They play the nine instruments common to all Hindu Nepal (this role is mainly reserved for the *damai*, but this is not an absolute rule), at the time of the village *pūjā* (cf. p. 330), at the prayers addressed to the goddess of the rain before the arrival of the monsoon, and for some weddings of rich families which follow the Brahmin rites.

The discriminatory measures with regard to the Untouchables are very limited and less rigid than in Hindu countries. (For instance an untouchable woman can get water at the same source as a Gurung woman). An Untouchable cannot enter a Gurung house nor touch a Gurung, and the one never eats the food of the other. But, apart from these taboos, all the non-ritual activities of the Gurungs can be done with the Untouchables. The only divisions of labour between them are for the professional activities done solely by the Untouchables who are blacksmiths, tailors, goldsmiths and cobblers (the last are absent from Mohoriya). The contacts between Gurungs and Untouchables are limited in some ways to an economic collaboration. The Gurungs offer the Untouchables work in their fields because they lack man-power. The Untouchables work for the Gurungs for their subsistence, but remain totally independent from their employers, whom they can leave when they want to. The Untouchables are not the servants of the Gurungs. They are day labourers who always retain, as their secondary occupation, their professional artisan activity. They are paid the same as Gurungs and their work is not devalued by their caste status.

Of the four Untouchable groups, the Tailors, Blacksmiths and Cobblers are poorer. In general the economic situation of the Untouchables is precarious for they possess hardly any land. Apart from their economic relations with the Gurungs, they lead an altogether distinct life. Their manner of dressing is different. The rites which they practice are Hindu and are only done within their group. They bury their dead. Those among them who can enter into a trance take care of the sick. They only speak Nepali.

However, it is not necessary to think that the relations between the Gurungs and the Untouchables are devoid of cordiality, even of friendship. The following are examples which illustrate this attitude.

The mistress of a Tailor's house fell gravely ill. A local Gurung priest (*pucu*), famous throughout the region, was living with me at the

time. He was my most reliable informant on matters of religion. A Gurung came to beg him to go at once to examine the sick person. Several villagers that I met that day were obviously upset at the illness of this old woman who was very much liked by all the population. My *pucu* friend left to examine her (on the terrace of her house and without touching her) and gave her a mixture of boiled herbs to drink.

One day, at the end of the afternoon, a fox was surprised by the village dogs, prowling near the houses. The villagers organised a general hunt. A young man, a Goldsmith, trapped the animal in an orchard, but his fingers were badly bitten as a result. The entire village was for an instant united, applauding and admiring the young Goldsmith who had killed the fox without the aid of a gun. The first minutes of emotion having passed, it was noticed that the hands of the young man were bleeding profusely. The Gurungs present were unanimous in telling him to go to see me to bandage them. But, to do this, I had to touch the Goldsmith. On numerous occasions I had been warned to avoid contact with an Untouchable so as not to become polluted. Furthermore, no Untouchable was allowed to enter the loft in which I lived. I had not fixed this rule, but it had been tacitly acknowledged by the village. I attended the young Goldsmith, outside my dwelling, and was nevertheless invited the same evening to eat in the house of a Gurung villager. During my stay, Untouchable were sent to me over and over again by Gurungs for me to treat.

The last anecdote shows clearly that the rules concerning impurity are not rigidly followed by the Gurungs. Adult Untouchables often play with Gurung infants, holding them in their arms and attempting to make them laugh and amusing them. Likewise, the children of 10-12 play together and roll on the ground without worrying if their opponent is a Gurung or Untouchable. It is not until about the age of 13-14 years (a little earlier for girls) that the discrimination is clearly perceived. I have often asked the Gurungs what they are supposed to do when they are polluted by an Untouchable. At first I was told that this never happens and that they only had a distant memory of such a thing happening. When I insisted, they told me that in this case it was necessary to go to see a brahmin, but no-one was able to show me in detail how to remove the pollution. I only know of a single gesture showing the concern of a Gurung to avoid impurity; when he drinks, he

sometimes flicks the surface of a bowl of liquid which he is going to drink to purify it, above all when he is in a strange house.

The Gurungs ignore the deeper significance, the exact limits and the logical consequences of the idea of impurity which is, in fact, almost absent in the traditional thought of Gurungs (cf. funerals, p.281). Nevertheless, as a result of the influence of the Hindu Nepalese groups governing the country, the Gurungs have been forced to apply it in their relations with the Untouchables in order to assure themselves a superior status in Nepalese society.

3. - The Habitat.

a) *The situation of the village.*

Mohoriya (*Mohoriyā* in Nepali, or *Mohre* in Gurung) [18] is situated on the western slope of the upper valley of the Modi, at an altitude estimated at about 2,100m. (fig. 3). This village is established on two levels on the slope climbing up from the Modi (at about 1,500 m) towards the summit of the range (2,600-3,000 m). Mohoriya is a group of about a hundred houses. The lands of the village form a long band running from the river to the forest at the top of the mountain. To the south-west it is bordered by the lands of the village of *Tūhsı* (*Dangsing*, nep.) and to the north-east by that of the large village of Kota (*Chandrung* or *Ghandruk*, nep.) which extends as far as the eternal snows of the Annapurna range[17]. Mohoriya is linked to the main route from Pokhara to Tibet, by a road on the hillside linking Kota, Mohre, and Tuhsı with Birethāti. Stopping places are built on this route. During the dry season, Mohoriya is linked to the eastern slope of the Modi valley by a road using a temporary footbridge, which avoids a long detour by the bridge at Birethāti or at Lāhdruk, built above a narrow gorge in which the tumultuous waters of the Modi flow. A road climbs the high slopes above the village in the north-west direction, then it divides into two branches; one rejoins the route to Tibet further to the west by the valley of the Kali Gandaki, the other leads towards the north

[18] I will use either the Gurung or Nepali name in what follows.

in the direction of the high pastures found on the southern slopes of the Annapurna range. The inhabitants have a very precise sense of the lands which surround them, they locate themselves exactly with the four points of the compass. Asking the way is easy. The reply is precise, "This place is much lower in the direction of the east, after having passed this and that landmark and this and that feature of the terrain". Furthermore, military training has taught many men to read a map. I have been able to check this by showing them those which I had.

The situation of Mohoriya can be taken as an example to describe an ordinary Gurung village. A village is always situated at an altitude of between 1,800 and 2,300 m., most often on a mountain slope between the summit and half way down the slope, but sometimes on the line of the ridge of the range. The first type is illustrated by the site of Mohoriya, the fields extending all around the village. The second is that of Ghanpokhara and Ghalegaõ which are located astride the line of the ridge of a range in the Lamjung region, the village lands descending the length of one or two slopes.

The settlements are within reasonable distance of each other. One reaches a neighbouring village after one to three hours of walking, which allows very frequent contacts between the communities. Houses are constructed in tiers on the hillside. Three or four dwellings share a large platform, the ground being at the same level as that of the roofs of houses lower down. The slope is such that, most often, the view is entirely open and one can see right down to the bottom of the valley. Gurung houses, as we shall see, are not a dwelling shut in on themselves, they open onto nature and to everyone. Between the houses, orchards are dotted on the small pieces of land that are not built on.

b) *Plan of the Village.*

As indicated in the plan (fig. 6), the village stretches in the N.E.-S.W. direction along the main path which winds along the edge of the hill linking the different villages on the western slope of the Modi Valley. Lengthwise, the diagram traces the development of the settlement of Mohoriya. The place where Sawai-rhõ, founder of the village, settled is now shown as house A which has been rebuilt by his descendants. The first houses in Mohoriya were built in the part to the south of the actual village. One hundred years ago - that is to say thirty years after the

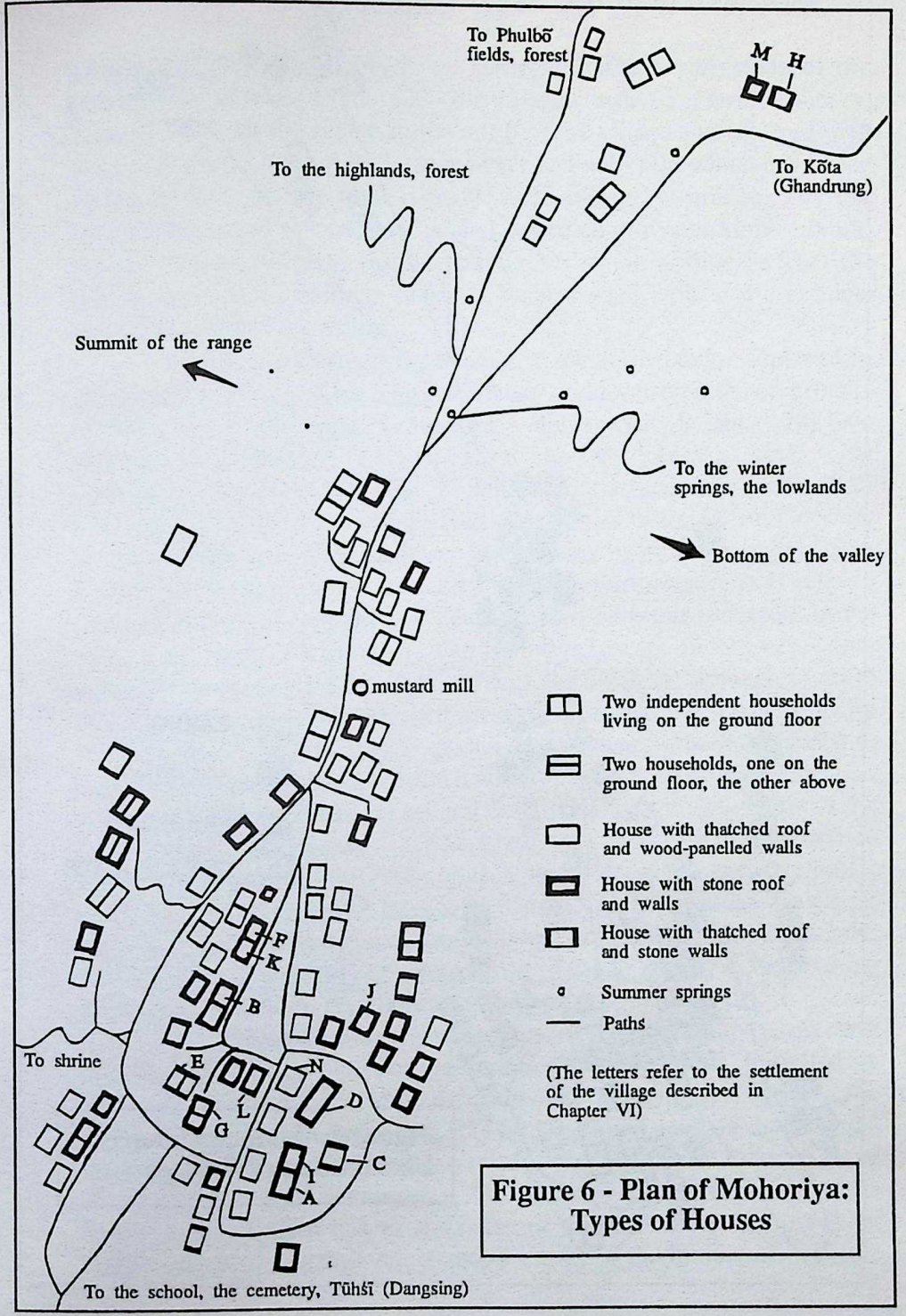

Figure 6 - Plan of Mohoriya: Types of Houses

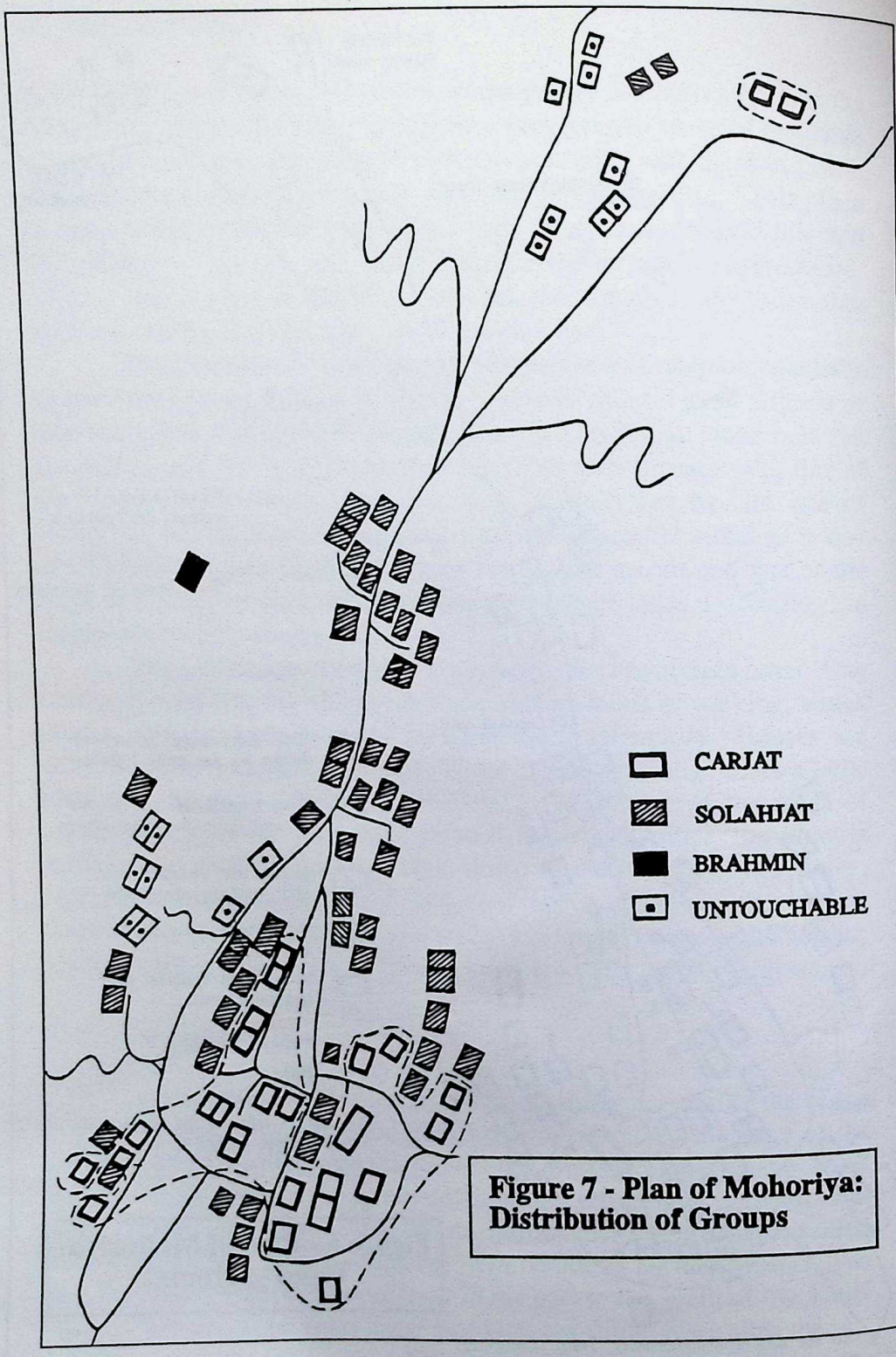

Figure 7 - Plan of Mohoriya: Distribution of Groups

founding of the village which we can fix, thanks to the study of the genealogies, in about 1815-1820 - the village consisted of twelve houses. Around 1890, all the region to the north of the village was covered with woods inhabited by leopards, mouse-deer and wild pigs which have been driven up towards the high lands because of land clearance. The old families increased in size, new inhabitants came to live at Mohoriya and the settlement extended further and further to the north-east from the first houses. The dwellings of Untouchables were built at the extreme north and west of the village.

Among the Gurungs themselves, a social distinction appeared in the grouping of the houses. Gurung society divides itself into two groups, of which the first, Carjat, is superior to the second, Solahjat.[18] (We will return to this later; in Nepali, *car* | four; *jāti* | caste or kind; *solah* | sixteen). Thus one sees (fig. 7) that the Carjat houses are almost all found in the south of the village while the houses of the Solahjat occupy the rest of the site. This tendency towards segregation is general, even if it is not always shown as clearly as here. Furthermore it is easy to understand how it happened. When a newcomer wanted to settle in the village, he had to ask the *kroh*, who is always (except on rare occasions) a Carjat. But the Carjat do not marry with the Solahjat, although they are closely linked with them. Thus, if the newcomer was a Carjat - probably related more or less directly to the headman himself - the *krōh* tended to assign him land on which to build a house in the Carjat district. However one will note the presence of several Solahjat houses in the middle of the Carjat houses. Moreover, in comparing this distribution with that in figure 6, one sees that the better houses, with stone walls and slate roofs, tend to be concentrated in the Carjat district. This is because the Carjat hold the greater proportion of the lands and are richer than the Solahjat. One can pursue the study of the grouping of the houses by distinguishing the clans, and within the clans, the lineages (cf. p. 187) [19].

The different groups of houses are served by a complete network of paths which wind between the houses. They are paved, bordered by walls and regularly repaired by the community. They play a double role. The paths allow the passage not only of people and animals, but also the flow of water during the monsoon rains. The streams use these artificial paved beds without undermining the walls of the terraces where the houses stand. I often had to climb the paths while a furious torrent of dirty water broke against me, soaking me up to the middle of my legs.

The sources of water necessary for household consumption are found at the place where the road divides to the north of the village, between the last Gurung houses and the settlement of Untouchables. The place is called the *kyu-wa-dhū* (*kyu* : water; *dhū* : tree or plant?). It is rocky and covered with short grass. All the springs except one (in the lower part of the *kyu-wa-dhū*) are dry during the winter.

In the period of the monsoon, water gushes out in six or seven places. In the middle of the village, one finds the mill used to crush the grains of mustard to extract oil. This mill is the property of the village. Like the spring, the mustard oil mill is a centre for gossips who endlessly discuss the events occurring in the village.

At the crossroads situated near the mustard oil mill stands a great paved platform, rectangular in shape, the surface of which is a metre above the ground. This type of construction, common throughout Nepal, is called a *cautara*. All round the platform is a ledge, at 80 cm. from the ground, on which one puts loads carried on one's back. It is at this crossroads that the village assembly meets, where one to two hundred people gather round the headmen and notables of the community. Only the men sit on the platform, the women remain standing, leaning upon neighbouring walls. These meetings have no formality about them. Each person places himself where he thinks best, the children filter among the groups here and there. The *krōh*, the headman of the village, reads the agenda and each question is then discussed by all the villagers present, both male and female. If a decision needs to be taken, it is that of the majority of those present. The crossroads where the *cautara* stands is in some ways the public place of Mohoriya. The peasants meet here in the morning before leaving for the fields; in the evening they chatter here after having taken their meal. The terrace and gallery of a house which is near the crossroads is another favourite place for the unoccupied people of the village who come here to talk during the long hours. Often the porters and travellers from neighbouring villages rest for several minutes at the *cautara*, and chatter with the villagers they find gathered there already. On two of the paving-stones are engraved checker boards on which the children play at "tigers and cows" (a sort of chess game).

The house of the *krōh* is the second meeting place of a Gurung village. Seated on the gallery of the house, the headman regulates the conflicts between villagers with his Council of eight to ten members. Certain public assemblies also occur on the terrace which extends in front

of his dwelling. Twice a year, ritual dances are done there during four to six days.

c) *The school; the level of instruction.* [APPENDIX A]

The first school in Mohoriya was constructed there two years ago. It is built on an isolated promontory in the fields, 400 m. to the south of the village. From its terrace one can admire the most magnificent panorama of the valley, extending from the Annapurna Range to the north as far as the southern range of lower hills some 50 to 60 km. away. In fact, the school belongs to both Mohoriya and Dangsing and the children of these two villages can come there to study. The building was constructed by the men of the two villages. Mohoriya spent 800 rupees on its erection. It is a stone building. The front is not walled and lets in plenty of air and light. Wooden benches are arranged in the one school room. On the wall is a black-board. The teacher, appointed by the Nepalese Government, is paid by the latter, but all the other costs of the school are charged to the village or families, who must in particular provide the school furniture. The establishment of the school at Mohoriya is part of a vast programme by the Government of Nepal, which is attempting to develop teaching in all the countryside. This is a gigantic task since eight years ago Nepal did not possess any schools except in the larger towns in the lowlands. The problem remains of finding the large number of teachers needed to work in the highland communities. The teachers are at the moment recruited in the valleys of Pokhara and Kathmandu. To be sent into a highland community is considered to be exile for these young men. They are most often Newars, Chetris or Brahmins and they find themselves completely isolated among the highland populations, in surroundings where the moral values and social rules are strange to them. It can easily be imagined that the causes of friction between the teacher and villagers are numerous and that a certain ill-feeling exists on both sides.

Thus, a young teacher from Kathmandu was sent to Mohoriya. He lived on the first floor of a house in the southern part of the village. He stayed six months and then left at the beginning of the school holidays. He was never heard of again and, since that date, the school has not had a teacher. Furthermore, the fugitive had borrowed money

from various villagers in Mohoriya and forgotten to repay them before disappearing. When I left the village at the end of 1958, the head of a household had gone to occupy the children during the winter of 1958-59 to minimise the absence of the teacher.

In each Gurung village, a large number of adults have learnt to read and write while serving in foreign armies. They are capable of teaching their children the rudiments of reading, of Nepalese writing and of mathematics. This has led to much improvement in the level of education: 80% of the adult male population (Gurung, between 19 and 35) of Mohoriya know how to read and write Nepali in the *nagari* [*deb-nagari*] script. A large number of men also know how to write Nepali in Roman characters. Three among them can understand if one speaks English. Finally, a large number of those who have served in the Indian Army understand Hindi. Moreover, 8% of the adult women know how to read and write. These figures are surprising when one compares them with the results of the census of Nepal in 1952-54. The percentage of those who, having reached the age to go to school (5 years), know how to read and write is 4.5% for the whole of Nepal, 8% for the men, 1% for the women. According to the report of the census commission, it is the valley of Kathmandu where the mean is highest: 50% of men and 15% of women know how to read and write. The report indicates also that in the Kaski region, in which Mohoriya is situated, the percentage is the next highest after that of Kathmandu: it is 15.6%. (The map accompanying the report is not very exact. Thus, I cannot be sure if Mohoriya was really included in the Kaski region. If this is not the case, it does not matter greatly for Mohoriya was still on the borders of the region.)

I must explain the difference between the figure obtained for Mohoriya and that given by the report for the Kaski region. The 80% of men and 8% of women who know how to read and write represent only the Gurung population, who alone directly concern us in this study. If one calculated the general average, including all the inhabitants over five years, as did the census, one arrives at 31% This is still much higher than the figure given in the report, even if one supposes that no inhabitants under 19 years can read or write (which is not the case). One sees two reasons for the difference. On the one hand, recruitment has been more intense in Mohoriya than in other villages in the region, and consequently more men have learnt to read and write in the army. On the

other hand, the census does not seem to have included in its figures the men and women absent from the villages. However, all those men who serve abroad at the present time know how to read and write. They will return one day to their natal village and, sociologically, belong to that community.

Many of the Gurungs know how to read and write because they were well taught during their military training in India, in Malaya, and, in certain cases, at Kathmandu when they served in the Nepalese army (four cases at Mohoriya). Most often, they were not taught as children but they learnt when they enlisted, about 18-19 years of age. Meanwhile, a fair number of girls and boys in the new generation know how to decipher *nagari* [*deb-nagari*] characters and often even Roman ones. Their fathers on retirement or on leave have taught them. One finds books of all sorts in the home: manuals of tactics for combat with a machine gun, of mathematics, of conversation, books illustrating the main episodes in Hindu mythology, and Hindi alphabets. Often, in the evening, one sees a mother surrounded by children in the process of reading alphabet books containing simple phrases. The children are eager to learn and do it without difficulty. In my house I have frequently seen four or five children or adolescents, each seated in a corner of my loft, quietly reading aloud to themselves from the little pamphlets in Nepali which I possessed, without worrying whether I heard them or even if I was still there. They enjoyed drawing Roman characters, in a very simple way, so that I could copy them on my typewriter. They would then decorate the sheet of paper and address it to a relative in another village in the valley.

All the Gurungs are bilingual. They can as easily speak Nepali as Gurung. The men and boys use Nepali more and more, even when they are not with foreigners. The men get into the habit of continually speaking Nepali in the army. When they return on leave to the village, they do not easily lose the habit and the boys have a tendency to copy them. In contrast, the women and the little girls do not speak among themselves except in Gurung. In general, their Gurung vocabulary is much richer than that of the men.[20]

We will see the very important consequences of this relatively high level of education in a society which is, in all other respects, underdeveloped.

CHAPTER II

HABITS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Because of their isolation in the high valleys, the Gurungs have maintained their original traditional skills, despite the strong southern Nepali-Indian influence which has made itself felt throughout Nepal.

Several aspects of workmanship are entirely in the hands of Untouchable groups, who are non-Gurung: the goldsmiths, workers in metal, and leather workers. It is probable that this situation is very old. In contrast, the Gurungs have kept the arts of weaving and basket making for which they are famed amongst the Nepalese.

In this chapter, I shall try to describe in detail certain technical skills which have not as yet been studied. I leave to the specialists the task of placing the material culture of the Gurungs amongst that of the Himalayan peoples, many of whom have not as yet been studied except very superficially.

To simplify the account, agricultural methods are treated in the chapter on agriculture. I shall firstly look at habits relating to the body, to clothes, and to those that are related to food. Finally I shall describe the specifically feminine or masculine habits.

A.- THE BODY.

I. - The care of the body.

The Gurungs do not wash in order to purify themselves but for hygiene. I only know of one cleansing ritual: that practised by the women when a member of their family dies. The morning following the

death they go to wash their hair at the village spring, after having untied it at the moment of the death. Hygiene is not bothered about with the same care all through the year. During the winter and mainly in March, April and May, before the monsoon, only a little water comes from the springs, and people wash rarely because of the lack of water.

In Mohoriya, it is necessary to walk for ten minutes towards the north-east before reaching the only spring, which gives a thin trickle of water. One has to queue up there, then climb back to the house up a very steep slope with a heavy copper pitcher full of water. During the dry season only the small children are washed every four to five days, on the terrace of the house. The women wash their faces, mouths and feet in the morning when they go to fetch water from the spring. When the men get up they take a jug of water, rinse out their mouth and pass their wet hands over their face and hair. They never have a complete wash at the house. They bathe sometimes when their work takes them down to the lower lands, near to the Modi, or to the north of the village near to the only little stream which never dries up. From time to time, the women go to wash their hair at the spring and use the occasion also to wash clothes. At this time of year, fleas and lice proliferate.

When the monsoon comes the water soaks the entire village. The temperature rises and they take their clothes off without worrying about getting cold. Moreover the storms are so heavy that everyone is forced to take a shower bath. The body and clothes are then frequently washed at the spring (the clothes having been boiled beforehand in the house with ash). The children are always washed with soap which is used more and more often. Then their bodies are lightly oiled with *ghī* (clarified butter). Outside the house, women never wash the parts of the body between the top of the breasts and the thighs. They wash themselves with warm water inside the house, or else soak themselves, half-dressed, in a pool in a river, well hidden by vegetation from the gaze of strangers, then dress with clean dry clothes. This they do every two or three weeks [21]. The women have a great fear of being discovered partly naked. While a little to the south of the Gurung country, the women of the Chetri and Brahmin villages often go about with their blouses open and their breasts exposed, the Gurung woman "is ashamed" to show that part of the body between the shoulders and the knees. Even when it is very hot she wears a lot of clothes. Only the old women sometimes sit in the sun for an hour

or two, anointing their bare breasts with oil. In contrast, the men work with bare chests during the summer and very often with the thighs uncovered. The boys are half naked until eight or nine years, the girls until five or six. When it is hot, very young children between two and four years play on the terrace of the house entirely naked.

Pane [*pena*], the pulp left after the oil has been extracted from the mustard seeds, is used for washing hair. *Umi* [*unphi*], pulp of a dried fruit from which they have removed the nut, provides an oil with which the women massage the body before washing the breasts inside the house. The face, arms, hands and legs are regularly coated with *ghī*. After having churned the boiled milk, the peasant takes advantage of the hands being covered with butter to massage the legs and arms.

The women do their hair regularly about every two days, particularly when they are not working too hard in the fields. They comb their hair with a fine wooden comb (*pre*) and then rub in mustard oil or *ghī*, after having been deloused by another women. It is then pulled back and plaited from the nape of the neck. A red string is attached to the end of the plait. They use no perfume.

Some former soldiers wear their hair in a European style, but usually the men never comb that part of the hair which is hidden by the *pule*, the national Nepalese hat. Two or three times a year the whole head is completely clipped by a friend, with clippers brought back from India by a soldier. A lot of Gurungs are in the habit of keeping a long lock of hair on the crown of the head in the Indian manner.

2. - Hygiene.

Adults excrete in the fields. During the night, they go to certain preferred corners of the village which smell unpleasantly during the warm, dry days which precede the monsoon. But the torrential rains clean up the village. The young children excrete anywhere when they need to. Dogs immediately come and clean up the place. Men and women squat to urinate. The old women sometimes do this standing up.[22]

3. - Behaviour and posture.

When a Gurung sits to work he crosses his legs "like a tailor", moving his chest to right and left with great ease. It is in this position that he undertakes all the work of basket making, rope making, shelling, etc. A woman works sitting on her heels having gathered her skirts between her thighs with a rapid gesture. When she is cooking, delousing, or resting, she sits, both legs folded in front of her, one upright, the knee at the top, and the other resting on its side on the ground, the two feet being beside each other.

When a man is resting or chatting, he sits on his heels, leaning his back against a wall or a wooden post. If one goes into a house or onto a verandah, the master or mistress of the house promptly brings a wooden seat or a round straw mat on which one can sit in order to avoid getting dirty or cold. In every house there are usually two folding beds one of which is always kept for the head of the family. The other can be used by various members of the household, the eldest son, children, a young daughter-in-law and her baby, the sick etc. The other persons sleep on the ground around the hearth in the *kota*. The bedding and mats are laid out on the ground for the night and rolled up in the morning like Indian "bedding". During the hot season the men sometimes sleep on the verandah, which is where the servants usually sleep.

Their way of walking, adapted to the mountainous terrain, is graceful. The women hardly lift up their feet, balancing the lower part of their body from side to side, holding the top of their heads absolutely still. The man has a more supple and lighter step, quick and even, imperceptibly moving the upper part of his body. All carrying is done on the back. The basket is carried with a strap across the forehead. This is attached to a rope which goes around the lower part of the basket and keeps the load close to the body. Then one leans well forward to keep an even balance. The hands are crossed at the back of the head to relieve the neck. The load is often 30 to 40 kilos and sometimes reaches 50 kilos. The shoulders, neck and legs of the Gurungs become very muscular and knotted as a result of such exercise. From the age of eight or nine the children go to the spring with a small basket and jug to fetch water. Water is carried in the same way in the big copper pitchers (weighing 10 to 15 kilos when full) placed evenly at the bottom of the basket. A tall

narrow neck prevents the water from spilling out with the rhythm of walking. When a group of Gurungs travel, the man walks in front carrying a light load on his back, the woman shares the load and often carries an umbrella holding it closed on her head with her hands crossed in front. The man on the other hand hooks the rounded handle of the umbrella into the collar of his clothes and leaves it hanging on his back.

All along Nepalese roads one finds *cautara*. These are piles of stone forming either a rectangular platform, or a kind of terrace jutting out over the path. At the height of a man's kidneys there is a sort of ledge on which one puts a basket whilst stopping, the back against the *cautara*. Thus one can put the load down and take it up again without having to crouch, a procedure which requires painful effort. In this case the porter must sit down against the basket in a cross-legged position. Then, having pushed the strap onto his forehead, he tips his chest forwards to pull up the load from the ground. He gets onto one knee, the two feet still crossed. Leaning mainly on the leg which was first raised, he lifts the load, the second leg straightening little by little and one foot slipping around the other in order to put it on the other side in its normal position, until the body is completely upright.

Work in the fields is usually done standing up, the body bent double, the hands touching the ground, legs slightly apart. Sowing and reaping of millet is done by people squatting, the same posture being adopted by men and women.

Gurungs only prostrate themselves between kin. The woman puts her scarf over her head and bends very low towards the feet of the person she is honouring. The man, who must have his head covered, stoops very low in front and with his right hand touches both ankles of the man or woman he is saluting, he or she quickly touches the shoulder and encourages him to get up again, addressing him with affectionate words such as: "be a clever man" or "be an honest man" [1]. According to old informants, this habit of prostrating is quite recent. Formerly, they only used to bow, slightly inclining the head. During a reunion, if one

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[1] L'Abbé DUBOIS described a similar type of salutation in the south of India. (*Moeurs et institutions*, 2nd part, chap. XIV).

unintentionally knocks a neighbour's foot, one apologises, puts a hand on the ankle of the person knocked and then touches one's own forehead.

When they meet a stranger, Gurungs put their hands together in front of their face, in the Indian manner, and say "*namaste!*" (nep.). When eating, a Gurung sits on a small round woven mat or on a flat plank of wood (*peri* or *pera*, cf. nep.), next to the fireplace inside the house, after having rinsed his hands and mouth outside. He acknowledges the head of the house in the Brahmin fashion, and then eats with his right hand, putting vegetables and gravy onto the rice with the left or with the right. During the meal, he drinks grain alcohol or milk, just touching the cup with the lips. If he is not at his own home, he pours the liquid down his throat without his lips touching the cup. When he has finished eating he rinses his hands and mouth either onto the plate he has just eaten from, or outside the house.

A Gurung will never eat at an Untouchables's house, with an Untouchable, or food cooked by an Untouchable. In contrast, the latter will eat what is cooked by a Gurung, but never inside the house of a Gurung. He eats sitting on the verandah of the house of a Gurung who employs him, facing towards the wall.

The villagers smoke a lot, mostly imported Indian cigarettes. A person who has lit a cigarette takes several puffs and then passes it to his neighbour. The cigarette is not put into the mouth. It is held vertically between the index finger and the middle finger, all the fingers being folded onto the palm. Inhalation is done through a small crack which is left open in the hollow formed between the thumb and the closed index finger. Women fold their fingers over the palm and hold the cigarette in the circle formed by the little finger. They inhale the smoke in the same way as the men. In order to smoke all the cigarette, the end is put into a small, finely cut, bamboo tube used as a cigarette holder. I often smoked like a woman, which always caused them amusement.

The villagers also smoke a plant called *bhaṅ* (nep. *bhāṅ* Cannabis sativa) which, when it is treated, gives hashish. But here it is simply gathered in the hot lowlands and dried. Crushed into powder in the hand, it is mixed in the palm with a little cigarette tobacco and a drop of water, then the whole lot is put into a small wooden pipe, in the shape of a small bowl with a short stem extending from it. The stem is held as we have described above for a cigarette, but both the hands are tightly joined

and the crack through which they inhale is at the bottom of the thumb and the index finger [23].

4. - Clothing.

Gurungs dress in a very original manner. It is easy to recognise them when they mix with other peoples, as in Pokhara, the only urban centre to the south of the Gurung country.

a) *Women.*

- *colo* is a blouse, short sleeved during the summer, long during the winter. It comes down to the top of the waist with a small slit at either side. The arms are put into the sleeves, then it is tied on the left side with tapes at the shoulder and near the waist. This blouse is very close fitting and worn next to the skin. When a woman breast-feeds she pulls it up to uncover her breast. A small pocket is hidden in the lower part near the stomach by the cross-over piece. There women put several cigarettes or cigarette ends, cigarette holder, money, etc. This clothing is often made in black velvet.

- *ṅue* [*ṅañi*] is made from a long rectangular piece of light cotton cloth in every sort of colour (many are mauve with very discreet black squares) covering the body from the waist to the ankles. It is draped around the hips and pulled tight round the waist by introducing a little of the cloth between the skin and the skirt, the tightness of the latter ensuring that it remains fixed. The *ṅue* is made from many types of imported cloth.

- *phogi* (*pho* - stomach) is a waistband. It is made from a very long strip of cotton cloth which is wrapped several times round the waist covering the upper part of the skirt. It is usually of a uniform, bright, colour.

- *tiki* is a small square of black velvet which is folded in half along its diagonal. It is placed in the small of the back, the two points coming forwards towards the stomach and is kept in place by the *phogi*

tight like a belt. The woman sits on this part of her clothing, folding the lower point and her *ṅue* between her thighs.

- *poro* is a large square of light cloth of a darkish colour, decorated with slightly raised designs, which covers the body from the knees to the chest. It passes under the right arm and is attached on the left shoulder by knotting the two upper corners together. It is open on the left side.

- *kra-mu* (*kra* - head) is a light square of cotton cloth which is worn over the head and falls down over the shoulders. It can by used in different ways. When working, the woman puts it tightly over her hair. The *kra-mu* hangs folded over her back, protecting the head from dust, rain or sun. When it is cold the *kra-mu* is brought down over the chest and then held together by the hands hidden beneath it. Finally it can be simply worn over the shoulders, falling gracefully around the body. When she is helping at a ceremony or travelling, a woman often puts on a white *kra-mu*.

All these clothes are made from cloth imported from India, which is light, and well made (except the velvets). They are used until threadbare and are not often washed except during the monsoon. They wear the same clothes until they are worn out, then others are made. The blouse is quite often changed as it is quickly torn on the shoulders and over the back with continual carrying. In a trunk in the house they keep some good clothes in reserve to wear on feast days.

b) *Men.*

- *pule* is a cap worn throughout Nepal. It is in the shape of a slightly truncated cone. It is usually made of a strong, black, fabric. In the mountains one can use it as a cup for drinking water from the springs. Now they are being made from multicoloured, light cotton cloth, and are much less strong. The price varies from 0.5 to 1.5 rupees.

- *bhoto* resembles the *colo* of the women. It has no little pocket and is made of pale cotton cloth which is quite strong. Sometimes it is cut from the white material made in the village.

- *phaso* is a loin cloth of white cotton cloth.

- *rhaṅ* is a rectangular piece of white cotton or *naṅi* (a kind of linen). It is folded in two down its length and the four corners are knotted two and two. Then the two knots made in this way are put together and then crossed, that on the left passing over the right, and vice versa. The material fastened on the left is slung over the left shoulder whilst that on the right is slung over the right shoulder. Thus the *rhaṅ* looks from the front like two bands of material crossing over the chest and meeting at the back, where there is a big expanse of cloth forming a large pocket which hangs down to the top of the thighs. This garment has a lot of uses. In the pocket the man carries his sickle, his tobacco, and vegetables which he picks in the course of the day. Pulling it over his head, he is sheltered from the rain and it serves as padding when he carries a basket on his back. At night, the man will take it off and will get into this rectangle of white cotton with the corners attached two and two, like a sheet folded in two. The *rhaṅ* is always made from cloth woven in the village.

- *kas*[2] is a long rectangle of white cotton, wrapped several times around the hips, coming to just above the knees and fixed at the waist. When the man is sitting, his thighs are half uncovered. If it rains he hitches up the *kas*, fixing the loose end to his belt to make it easier to walk.

- *phogi* is a belt which keeps the *kas* in place around the waist. It is often made of a sash of multicoloured wool, red, blue, and black,

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[2] An informant "lama murmi" said to Hodgson (first part of the19th century) that the men "lama murmi" wore a *khas*: "sheet for man" (B.H. HODGSON, Mss., India Office Library, vol. 5, p. 52 *verso*).

which is made in Tibet. The wearing of the military belt brought back from India by the soldiers has become very popular.

c) *Children.*

Until the age of six or eight, boys and girls wear a sort of shirt which comes to about the knees, the top of which is cut like the blouse of a man or woman. It is called the *tuh-bhota.*

When they are older than six to eight, the children gradually begin to wear the same clothes as their elders.

d) *Other clothes.*

Some of the clothes are seasonal or are worn at certain times of the day.

- *paki* is a large piece of a white woollen cloth in which the men wrap themselves after work when the weather is cold or when they are ill.

- *labru* is made from two large rectangles of thick wool sewn together along one length and one width. It covers the head and the whole body as far as the knees, like a large cape. The *labru* is woven in the village with wool from goats or sheep. The men use it mostly when it is cold or it is raining, as it is waterproof.

- *śyaku* is a sort of little roof with two slopes, made from basket-work, which is worn over the head. It protects the body and a basket, when this is being carried, from rain. It is mainly women who use a *śyaku.*

Even though the peasants still keep their traditional dress, the men are wearing clothes of a modern cut which they have got used to during their years of military service, more and more. Khaki shirts, shorts and pullovers are nowadays in use in the Gurung country and seem to be mainly adopted because of their convenience. In the village the peasants never wear shoes. But when they are travelling or are

invited to a ceremony in another locality, then they do. Almost all the shoes are made in the village by an Untouchable cobbler [24].

The clothing of the Gurungs, especially the men, belongs to an old tradition. In the historic myths told by the local priests, one finds many references to male clothing.

Certain of the clothes are used as symbolic, ritual objects, offered by particular kin in precise circumstances (cf. p. 281, funerals).

5. - Ornaments.

On feast days the women are magnificently adorned. Many among them carry a fortune in gold and coral on the head or chest. I will first of all describe everyday ornaments and then those which are only rarely worn.

- *marwali*: small gold earrings, flat and decorated with a red stone (*tuti*). The ear-lobe is pierced at the age of three to five with a thorn of the *ketu* (which grows in the lower regions). To encourage healing they smear the wound with mustard oil or with woman's milk. During the first year a small pin of *kal* wood is put in the hole to prevent it from closing up. Later they replace this with the ends of the midrib from a bird's feather (*cyorsiku*). The same technique is used for other holes in the ear (which are sometimes distended amongst the old women) and for that in the left nostril. The hole at the bottom of the ear is pierced among boys as well as girls. The holes made in the nose and the ears of the women are only done to enable jewellery to be hung there and do not seem to have an aesthetic value in themselves.

- *śrimili*: small rings of gold hooked all the length of the rim of the ear, through the outside edge of the ear.

- *na-ku*: large gold rings hooked like the *śrimili*.

- *dhori* [*dhungri*]: small gold disc which is screwed across the bottom part of the ear above the lobe.

- *dalmar*: (or *citi*), small gold earring worn by boys up to the age of 12 to 13. They are lozenge-shaped and hang like a pincer from the ear lobe.

- *bhiru*: a necklace of eight to ten rose-red coral beads and two green stones often put with two or four gold beads, threaded in a symmetrical order. I think this ornament is the most original of the everyday Gurung jewellery. The beads are larger or smaller according to the age and wealth of the woman. Up to the age of 14-15 years the necklace of six or eight small beads is called *natre* and then *bhirukor* until 18-19 years. The most expensive necklaces are made from rose-orange coral, of a large size, valued at 700-800 rupees. These beads are bought in Calcutta where they are imported.

- *asurphi*: ring worn on the third finger of the left hand.

- *ghanmai* [*ghanmai chya*, worn in pairs],*phyutani* [*phyutani chya*],*hakim* [*hakim chya*]: different kinds of gold rings worn on the little finger by both men and women. The *kalli* is only worn by women.

- *berneca* [*berne chya*]: ring in the shape of a macaroon.

- *balo*: green or red glass bangles worn by the women. They break them on the death of their husband.

- *khokre*, *sable*: gold bracelet worn on both ankles. *khokre* is only made with plated gold. Those of the children and of the small boys in particular are of silver.

- *rayi*: another anklet, worked as a string of gold balls.

- *bulaki*: a jewel worn on the lower part of the left nostril.

b) *Jewellery for feast-days.*

- *khilip* [*kilip*], *zoh* [*zhoka*], *tah*: this is a magnificent piece of head jewellery, entirely in gold. *Tah* is a large gold disc which is worn

above the forehead, tilted forward. The temples are covered with two plaques (*zoh*) whilst the back part of the head is decorated with two other gold plaques, but smaller (*khilip*). Each of these ornaments is finely engraved and inlaid with small red stones.

- *hamel*: a necklace falling low over the chest. It is made of a cord to which gold medals are attached along the outer edge.

- *naogiri*: a necklace of the same sort. The spaced gold beads are threaded on strings of small green beads.

- *arśe*: also a necklace falling over the chest made of a string of small green beads on which is threaded a long gold ornament, engraved with a group of discs and spheres.

- *biz* or *bij* [*bijbanda*]: a huge piece of jewellery in gold formed like a double crescent, hanging on the chest on a black cord.

Female ornaments are thus very valuable and very varied. The women are very attached to their jewellery and are proud to wear them. When they go to India or Burma [Malaya?] they take them with them. Moreover, many are bought with money saved up and taken home by the soldier on leave.

It is difficult to know which ornaments are specifically Gurung (some names seem to be Gurung: *na-ru* (*na*: ear), *bhi-ru*, *natre*, *tah* (flower), *zoh*, *arśe*, *khokre*, *sable*). The Untouchable goldsmiths are the only artisans making these pieces, and it is impossible to determine exactly those which were brought with them when they came from the south. It is certainly very important. The engraved designs are most often inspired by Nepalo-Indian models. The way of wearing a jewel in the nose clearly comes from the south. The countries with a Tibetan culture do not have this.

Nevertheless, together these ornaments make up a very original collection of jewellery which distinguishes the Gurungs from all the other Nepalese groups. From east to west of the huge Gurung country, the women wear the same jewels. On the other hand, the Untouchable peasants wear uniquely Nepalo-Indian ornaments [25].

B. - THE HOUSE.

There are two major types of Gurung house, a single-storied building having a wooden framework, walls of earth and wood and a thatched roof, and the two-storied house with walls of stone and a roof of slabs of thinly cut stone. One represents the traditional house, the other the rich and comfortable dwelling which is becoming more and more common nowadays.[26]

They are not built facing in a particular direction. In general, they are built on flat terraces, following the contours; backing onto the terraces above them, they open onto the valley.

1. - The house of wooden sections covered with mud.

I will describe here house *N* in Mohoriya which seems to me to combine the principle characteristics of this type of habitation. It is made up of a so-called dwelling proper and a verandah. Two wooden pillars driven into the ground, spaced at 3 m. 60, support the ridge of the roof. The walls are made of planks of wood supporting the edge of the roof. Lathework fills the gaps. Both sides of the lathework are covered with mud mixed with cow dung which gives the wall a smooth surface through which one can see the rounded shape of the upright planks. The two shorter sides of the house are rounded. The overhanging roof rests on the walls and the central pillars, which support a ridge beam. It forms two unequal slopes, the longer covering half the house and the verandah. The roof thatch is thick and attached to a light frame of wood. Only one little door opens onto the verandah. One has to stoop to enter. The verandah extends all along the front of the house. Wooden pillars support the roof which juts over the verandah to protect it against monsoon rains. Two or three steps connects the house with the lower level of the terrace. The floor of the house and the verandah is covered with smooth, dried mud. Very frequently a woman of the family wets it and spreads a little fresh mud with her hand. One never walks with shoes on in the house. A partition of vertical planks divides the length of the house in two. The first part (*pagro* [?]) communicating with the outside, is a sort of entrance hall. Here are arranged the agricultural implements, the

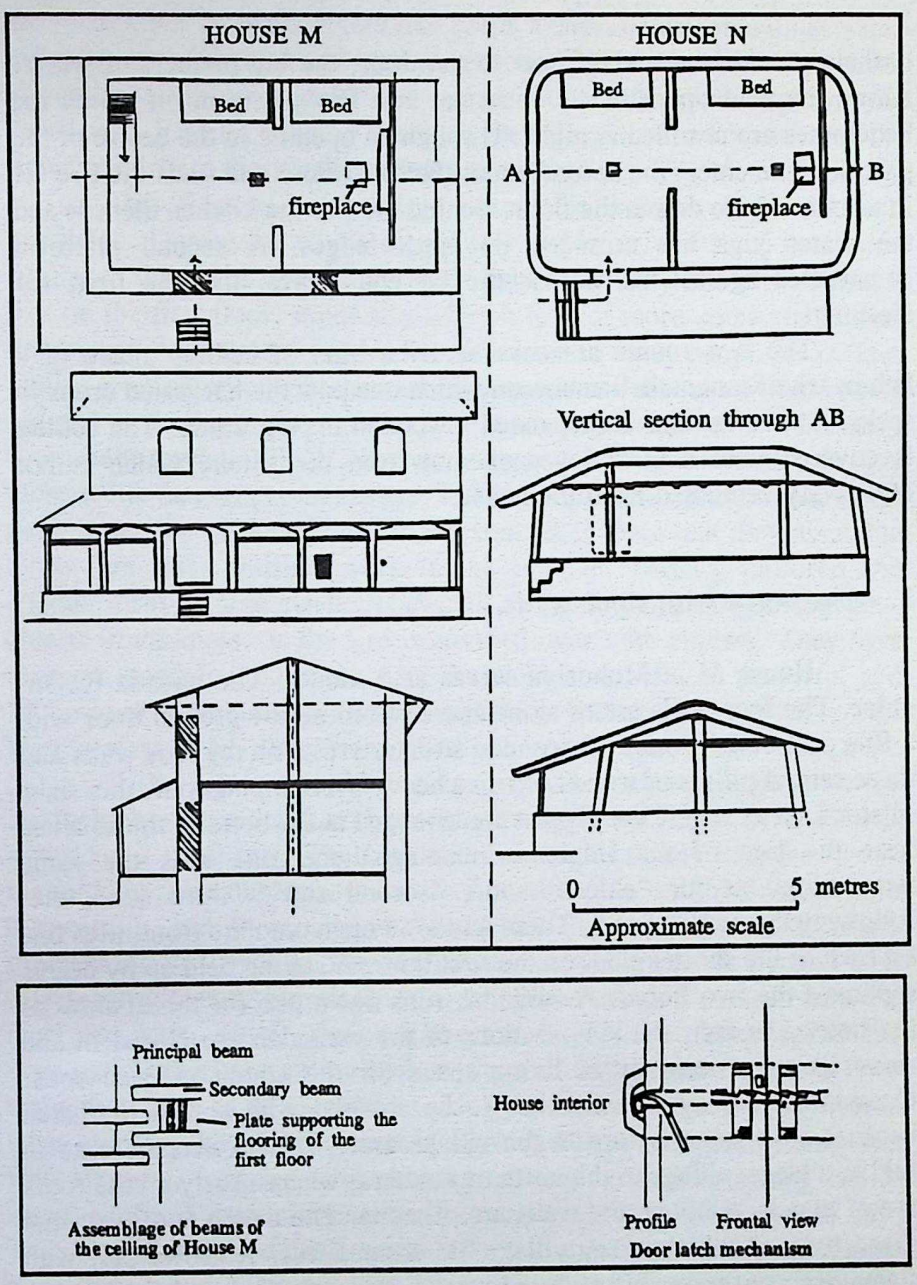


Figure 8 - The House

baskets etc. and on a shelf near to the door, the big pitchers of water. Along the wall opposite the entrance, is a low platform on which the bedclothes are unrolled at night. Through an opening in the centre of the partition one enters the second room (*kota*), where one finds the fire set in a square hole dug in the floor. Behind the fire the kitchen utensils and the water jugs are arranged on earth ledges. A second platform constructed against the wall at the far end serves, like the first, for sleeping.

The two rooms are covered by a kind of ceiling, made of a lathework of mountain bamboo on which one puts the harvested crops in sacks. Above the fire is suspended a wooden drying frame. The ceiling is covered with a thick layer of soot from the smoke which is not effectively ventilated from the house.

2. - The house with stone walls.

House *M* in Mohoriya serves as a model. The base is rectangular. The four walls are of stone and covered on the ground floor with a fine coat of dried mud. A wooden structure rests on the four walls and three central pillars of wood hold up a heavy overhanging roof, thin slabs of stone act as slates, the biggest are arranged at the bottom, the smallest near the line of the ridge. In naming them, one uses the same terminology as for "eldest son", "second son", "third son", etc. following the order of size. Three windows open onto the front, plus one on each of the shorter sides on the first floor. A ceiling held up by beams separates the two floors. A verandah runs down two (or three) sides of the house. In fact, the side sections of the verandah are closed in and serve as storerooms or as living space for the young married sons. Occasionally, a stone house has to be covered with a roof of thatch because split stone is rare in the village area. This is also the case in Siklis, a large village to the north of Pokhara, where nearly all the roofs are of thatch, although the walls are of stone. The thatch is of a special grass (*põ*), of which every village has some fields. It grows tall, with stems that are reasonably stiff and strong. It is dried before being put on the roofs, which are usually repaired in the winter. The lay-out of the house is the same as in the house made of wooden sections, but behind

the fireplace is a corner where one keeps a chest of valuable objects and everyday provisions. Furthermore, an opening in the wall at the front allows light into the *kota* through a cross-bar of wood, and improves the ventilation. Finally, a ladder placed at the side of the door leads up to the first floor where the yearly harvests are stored.

This floor is not lived in, though it is large, high and well ventilated. During the whole of my stay in Mohoriya I lived in a room similar to this and I found it perfectly habitable. Why don't the Gurungs live on the first floor, especially when it is a lot more comfortable than the ground floor of the wooden houses where so many people live? Each family could easily spread themselves throughout the house without being obliged to sleep parents, children, in-laws and grandchildren in the same room on the ground floor. It seems to me that observation of everyday Gurung life can supply an answer. First of all it is necessary to underline the importance of the activity in the *kota*. It is there that they assemble when they have finished work in the evening. Parents, children and friends form a large circle. They talk in small groups or all together, almost in darkness, as the fire is covered over with cinders. They love to meet together around the fire, the element of life, so powerful and mysterious. Associated with the fireplace is the mother, the wife, who spends most of her time there when she is not in the fields. It is from there that she converses with a guest, it is there that she cooks all the food which is placed around her within reach of her hands, whilst she is seated on a small mat. The *kota* is the centre of family life, the fire in the middle: there one eats, there one lies when one is ill or dead, next to the warmth. But an equally important fact could explain the Gurung's predilection for living on the ground floor of the house. A Gurung is ill at ease on his own, especially at night. When evening comes, once the meal has been eaten, groups gather in the village. They spend the evening together, one sitting against the other in the semi-darkness. Then when they wish to sleep, they lie side by side, body against body. Even when sleeping they stay together in a group. I have often seen youngsters who stayed late in my attic chatting or singing then stretching out to sleep. I offered each of them some covering. None of them wanted any. They stretched out one against the other and morning found them almost glued together in a single mass. A single man or woman tries in every way to find someone to come and sleep with him or her, especially if there are no children. Thus, there is a need for other people's presence,

even of physical contact, which impels people to stay together, living and sleeping, and the more people there are the better it is. The desire to separate oneself off in the house by living on the first floor, away from the *kota*, seems to be alien to Gurung psychology.

The verandah also plays an important role in the life of the house. During the rainy season, it is a safe refuge, well sheltered, where one can work, making baskets, husking corn, sewing and weaving. Here one receives visitors, seated on a mat, back resting against the wall. Furthermore, the verandah houses the little hand mill for grinding the grain, which is frequently in use as its output is small. Finally, it is on the verandah that the Untouchables, who cannot enter the house, sit, eat and sleep.

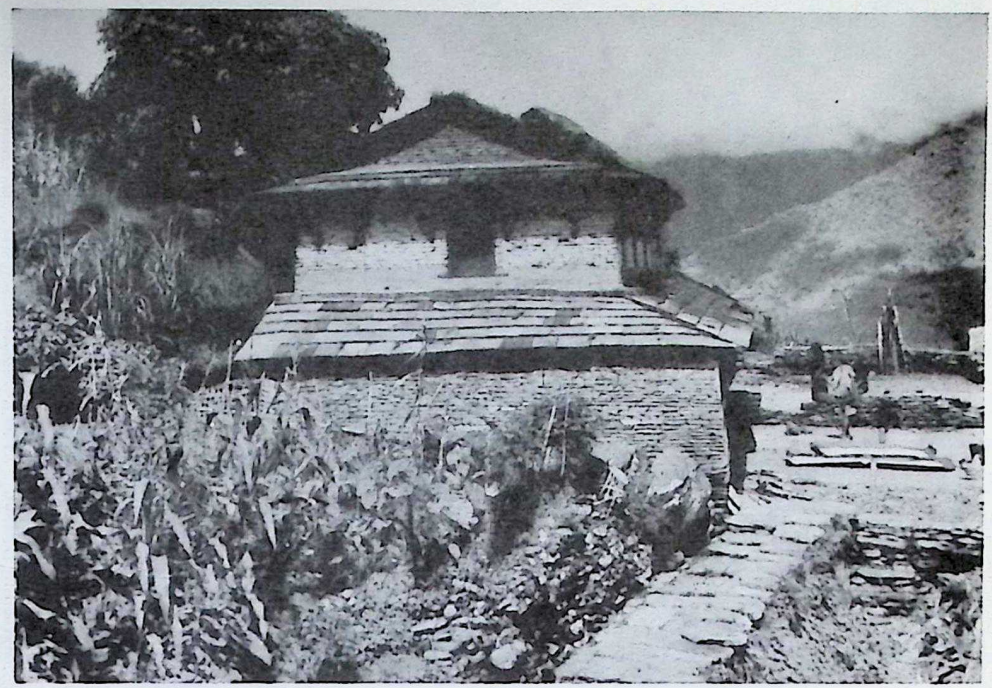
Certain stone houses are very large. The largest which I saw was at Kōta, to the north of Mohoriya, one of the most prosperous, if not the richest, in the western part of Gurung territory. It had almost 28 m. of frontage with seven windows on the first floor at the front and was 7 m. in depth. These houses are the symbols of the new Gurung riches accumulated by soldiers who serve in India or Malaya. One hundred years ago there was not a stone roof in Mohoriya. Only 4 houses had stone walls. The dwellings were small. Now 32 of the houses are spacious and comfortable, with roofs of split stone. At Kōta almost all the houses are of stone and most are covered with stone roofs.

How long does it take to build a stone dwelling similar to that described above?

Quarrying of stone	140	work days
Transport of stone	300	" "
Building of walls	300	" "
Cutting of wood	140	" "
Transport of wood	90	" "
Fixing of wood	60	" "
Splitting stone for the roof	60	" "
Transport of stone for the roof	60	" "
Erection of stone roof	20	" "
Total:	1,170	work days

PLATE IX

A stone house, *M*



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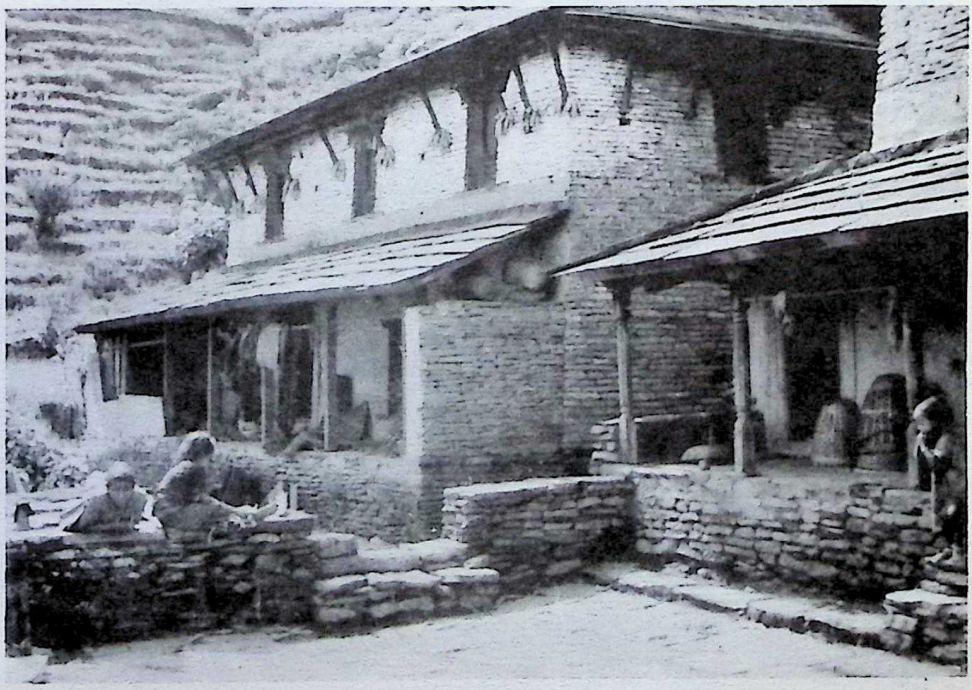

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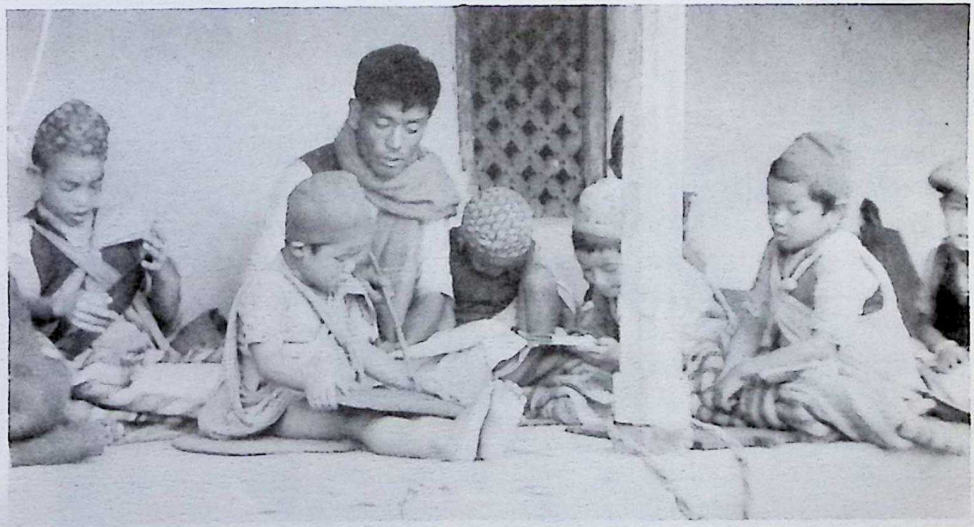

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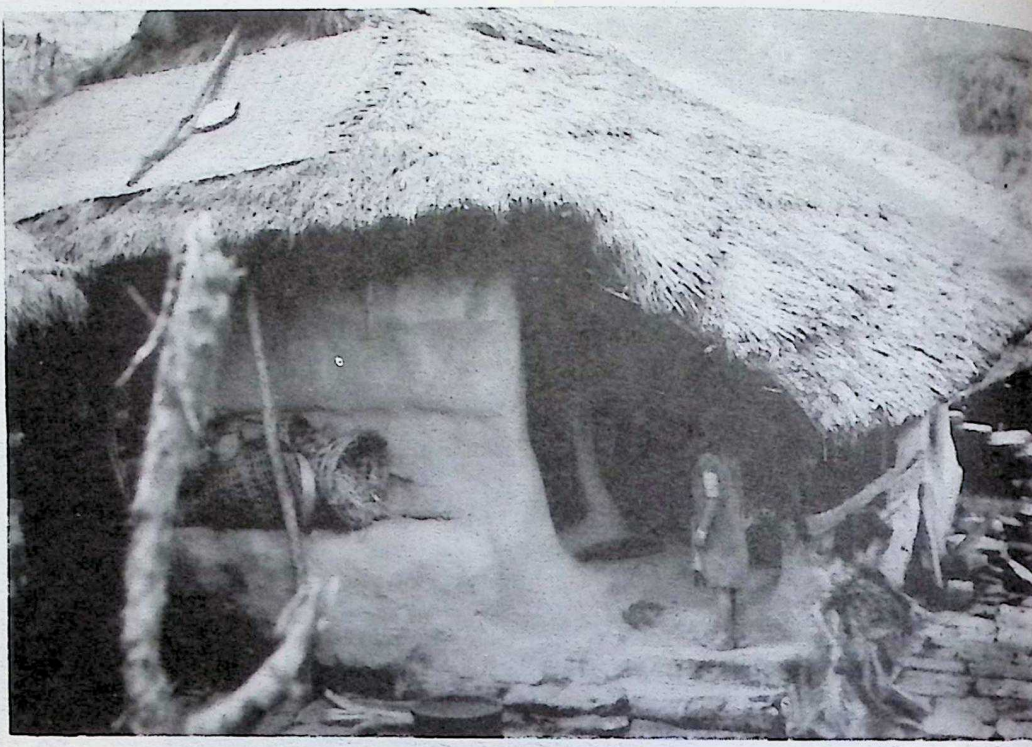
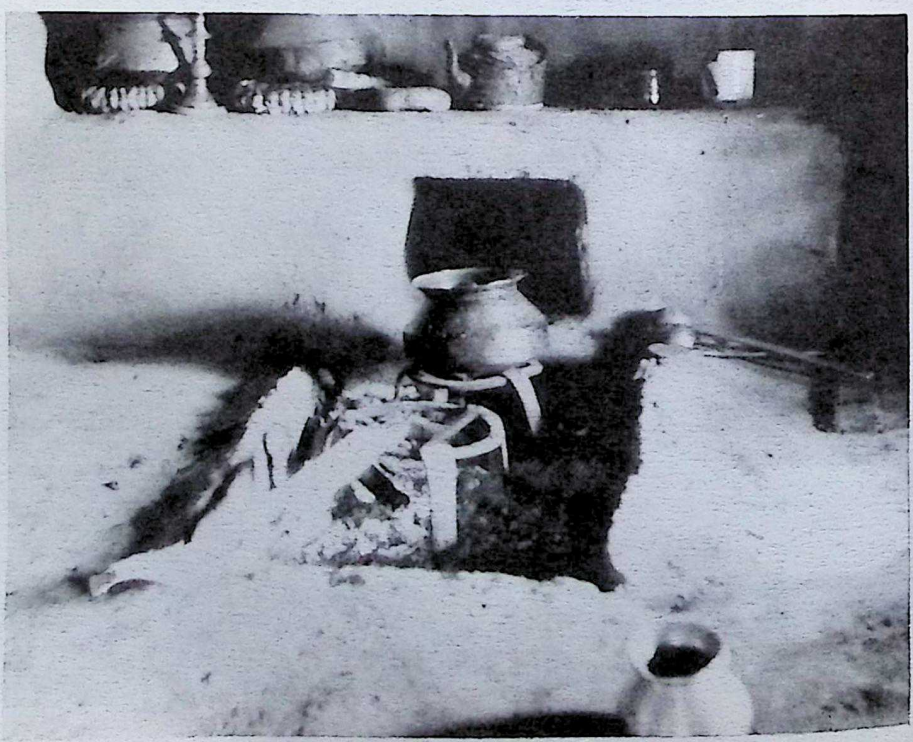


22. House *N* built of wooden planks covered with mud.



One work day costs a minimum of 1.5 rupees plus a meal. Such a house with all expenses included costs about 4,000 rupees.[27]

This sum is very high for a Gurung peasant. Nevertheless, new, comfortable houses are built every year in great numbers, and replace houses made of wooden sections. We will see later that, although very thrifty, the Gurung is prepared from time to time to spend a lot of money to affirm or increase his prestige in the community in which he lives.

One can build a house for much less than 4,000 rupees. Several families join together and agree to build their houses as a group. One sometimes calls such an association a *nogar*, although this word is applied mainly to an association of peasants carrying out joint agricultural operations. In 1955, five houses were constructed collectively by five families in Mohoriya; twenty-five people or thereabouts worked on them. The houses are built one after the other. Each family must supply the same number of work days. If one house needs more work than another, its owner must pay for the surplus work days. All the other work days are not paid for, but are repaid by reciprocal labour. Only the food is supplied each day by the house which is employing the gang of workers. The five houses were constructed between December and March. Each was built in an average of 25 days. Thanks to such methods, the price did not rise above 800 rupees for two of the houses. The three others cost between 1500 and 2000 rupees. In this system, the real cost of construction is not lessened but the cost in actual money is; hence, one family which hasn't got large monetary reserves can nevertheless build a house, without having to wait for sufficient liquid resources. The technical knowledge is pooled. One family has a good carpenter, another has a good stone cutter, another a man capable of carrying large loads. All these skills are united to form a construction gang, complete and homogeneous, which can simultaneously work at the different operations of building. It should be noted that the association is of a temporary nature and dissolves when the houses have all been made. The owners group themselves without any consideration of clan, or lineage, but with those whose status and level of life is more or less the same, so that in the end all the houses are built in a similar fashion. The association is never formed between Gurungs and Untouchables.

At Mohoriya as at Kota, nearly a quarter of the houses were constructed by collective work in these associations. At Kōta, the minimum price of a house so constructed is 1500 rupees.

3. - Details of construction.

- *Stones for the walls* are roughly hewn into small blocks of schist with a hammer and an iron chisel. The mortar is of earth which is used mainly to enable the stones to sit solidly and to fill up the gaps. The thickness of the wall is on average a "rope" (*yokru*) plus a *bita* (span), and has a total depth of about 55 cm. The stones are set flat. The foundations of the house are about 60 cm. deep. The walls are kept upright by horizontal beams placed at the height of the ceiling of the ground floor, binding the two facing walls. The walls above the first lean-to are covered in lime.

Much wood is needed in the construction of a stone house. One house takes five to seven trees. The maximum price of a tree is 5 rupees [28]. For the beams, one uses mainly alder wood (*utis* in nep.) and for the uprights, *kyu-śĩ* (*cilāune* in nep.). The sketches and photos (fig. 8; pl. IX, XII) show house *M* and *N*, and details of the jointed wood for the ceiling, etc. The door and windows are mounted on hinges of wood which form a single piece with the frame. The method of closing the double wooden doors is quite curious (fig. 8). On the outside at the bottom two rings are fixed through which one inserts a huge Tibetan padlock. On the inside, one metre from the ground, two huge handles of wood are attached through which a crossways bar is slotted with which one closes the door at night when inside. But one can also close the door from the outside. A hole at the level of the handles is pierced through one of the doors. One puts the curved blade of a sickle through and puts it on the notches cut in the bar and then one can slowly slide this through the hole of the second handle. Gurungs close their doors like this when they are not going to be away long from the house.

Carvings are influenced by Nepali models (mainly Newar). The work is relatively clumsy in the Modi valley. I have seen much more finished workmanship in the central Gurung country.

- *Stone for the roof* is worked from large blocks of comparatively hard schistose stone, which can be split into thin slabs if one strikes it following the line of cleavage, whilst pushing wedges between the layers. Nevertheless each slab is at least one and a half centimetres thick and is

heavy. The wooden framework must therefore be very strong. Some of the slabs are fixed with a nail (forged in the village or brought in) driven into the wooden beam which supports them. The weight and roughness of the other slabs ensures that the whole construction is firm and it is exceptionally strong.

A lot of the houses in the central Gurung region have roofs covered with shingles [29].

- *The floor and walls of the ground floor* are covered with quite a thin mud made of earth and cow dung which acts as a sticking agent. These surfaces are kept in excellent condition thanks to almost daily maintenance which is done at daybreak. The cleanliness of the inside of a Gurung house is remarkable and each mistress of the house is very conscientious and aware of her duty in offering her guest a dwelling as clean and neat as possible.

The Gurung house differs from all those built by other Nepalese groups. The Gurung village is recognisable from afar by its spacious stone houses which contrast sharply with the small mud houses of a village inhabited by Brahmins or Chetris.

4. - Buildings apart from the main house.

Each dwelling has, a little to one side, a shelter for keeping dry wood, and sometimes a small shed for the goats and sheep which live in the village. The well-off families have a more imposing annex. It is made of the same sort of stone as the main building. However, it is built slightly smaller and is not walled in at the front. In the lower part they store wood and the buffaloes and oxen are sheltered here during the monsoon. On the first floor is a huge loft where they heap straw and where they keep the agricultural implements. On the ground floor they often put a *kuni*, the apparatus used for husking rice. Some rich lamas fit out the loft as a small gom-pa (*dgon-pa*, tib.) where they keep their books and can meditate.

C. - THE FIRE.

Techniques relating to fire and its ritual value will be dealt with in different parts of our study to make the explanations easier. Note only that according to traditional techniques, fire was made by the friction of two stones or two pieces of wood. The match has now replaced this method with all its advantages, but they practice the old technique still when they are living in the woods or fields. In the house is the only site reserved for fire. That fire is never extinguished [30]. When not in use it is covered in cinders. Pieces of wood are placed radiating out from around the flames and are pushed into the fireplace to replenish it when necessary.

Fire is also a great enemy of a Gurung village. The old wooden houses are often a prey to flames. At Mohoriya, during the last three years, three houses have been destroyed by fire. The last burnt down two days after my arrival in the village. In the three cases, the fire in the *kota* was the cause of the burning. Gurungs take plenty of precautions to avoid fire breaking out. All matches and cigarettes lit in a house are carefully extinguished. [31]

D. - COOKING.

I. - Solid food.

a) *Rice*.

- *mlah-gõ* is boiled, husked rice (*kaĩ*). One pours some rice into a saucepan. To measure the water added, one places the four fingers of a hand vertically (*yo-kri-plhi-kya*; *yo-kri*: fingers; *plhi*: four) above the rice. The level of the water must reach the beginning of the fingers. The copper pan is placed on the fire. The rice is cooked when the water has completely evaporated. Using tongs with semi-circular grips, one takes the pan from the fire and keeps it near the fireplace until the meal.

- *khil* (*khir*, nep.) is rice boiled with milk.

- *kẽh* is a kind of fried bread. One fries a batter made of rice flour diluted in water to which one adds honey, milk, and eggs. If one puts little quantities of the liquid paste into a dish of boiling *ghĩ* (clarified butter), one gets balls of light paste, hollow in the centre (*khuala-kẽh*). One can also, with a thicker paste, make soft pancakes (*budkci*) resembling the wheat flour chapatis of India.

- *jilke*: one prepares with a wooden spatula (*kepa*), a pudding of cooked rice which one puts into a bamboo tube. One pushes it in as with a piston down to the other end which is closed with a grill of holes. In this way one obtains long strands which one puts into butter or boiling oil. One eats *jilke* in all of Nepal and India. One sometimes adds colouring to the paste. *Jilke* in which the strands are very thin is called *kyuni*.

- *lakẽ*: a fine rice powder is mixed with water, then the paste is poured very thinly onto a banana leaf. The whole lot is fried in a frying-pan. Then one dries it in the sun and separates the fried paste from the leaf. Like *jilke*, *lakẽ* can be kept for a long time. Before eating it, one puts it for an instant in the fat to make it warm and crunchy.

- *kora* [*korã*]: rice flour is cooked with milk which is constantly stirred, making a very thin cream.

- *bharol*: grains of fried, dried rice are thrown into boiling *ghĩ* having been soaked for a little while in warm water.

- *sakote*: prepared like *bharol* but one soaks the grains in milk instead of water.

- *śerãla*: one uses rice, which is not quite ripe, still in its husk. One toasts it in a pan, stirring it continuously. Then one takes the husks off and eats the grains dry.

- *čyũra* (*ciurã* nep.): one boils the rice in its husk. Then one toasts the grains in a frying pan and husks them.

- *bhūja* (nep.): the rice is boiled in its husk. Then the grains are dried in the sun. One husks them and then toasts them in a pan.

- *mlah-si-po*: rice toasted, unhusked, with *ghī* and honey.

- *camre* [*camrē*]: for nine hours one swells the unhusked rice in water. Then, for 5-6 hours, one cooks it slowly with *ghī* and honey.

b) *Maize* (*makai*, nep.).

- *krõ-bai makai* (*krõ-ba*: to roast): barely ripe cobs of maize are toasted in the fire. One eats them with milk, *ghī*, *dhai* (boiled curdled milk) or with *kola* (buttermilk).

- *teh-bai makai* (*teh-ba*: to cook): one boils the maize with onions, red pimentos (*kursyani*, nep.) and pickles (*cho*). One also call this way of preparing maize: *birõla*.

-*ṅho-bai makai* (*ṅho-ba*: to fry): the grains of maize are toasted in a pan and then eaten like *krõ-bai makai*.

- *sutu* (nep.): one fries maize flour and then eats it with honey whilst drinking tea.

- *pagõ*: the grains are fried then crushed and then mixed with warm water. One eats it with vegetables.

- *makai kẽh*: one roughly crushes the maize then husks it and grinds it into a fine powder. Then one uses it like the rice for *kẽh*.

- *ãta* (nep.): the maize is roughly crushed then boiled and eaten with *kola* (buttermilk).

- *kasar* (nep.): one makes balls of *sutu* then stuffs them with honey and then leaves them to dry for keeping for three or four days.

- *jilke*: the preparation is the same as that with rice.

- *cyo makai* (*cyo*: little) [*ćuneli makai*]: these are small grains of corn fried and eaten with tea.

- *cyura*: prepared as for rice.

c). *Millet (nare) - Barley (karu) - Buckwheat (karsi).*

This is eaten in the form of *pagõ*, *kẽh*, *sutu* etc. One sieves the flour in a special basket called *cyẽ*.

d). *Vegetables - Meat.*

Vegetables and meat make up the food called *khu* which is eaten with cooked cereals, rice, maize, millet etc.. They are called *tarkari* in Nepali. To a certain extent, it is the solid and liquid seasoning, of the cereal dishes. Most often, the vegetables are boiled and then fried in *ghu*. The main vegetables are: *lapu-ta* (radish); *turi-ta* (*tori*: mustard, nep.; mustard leaf, nep. *pase-ta*); *no* (onions) (nep. *piralu*); *khoi* (nep. *batta*); *kuta* (nep. *niuro*); *lautu* (asparagus); *mo-tu* (nep. *tusa* : young shoots of mountain bamboo); *alu* (potatoes, nep.); *cãpo* (mushrooms); *ũśi* (pumpkin); *tãñar* (nep. *dal*: lentils); *golbera* (nep. tomato); *mãs* (black lentils eaten with onions).

The meat is most often fried and then water is added to finish off the cooking and in order to get some gravy. Gurungs eat buffalo, goat, sheep, game, chicken, and sometimes fish. All sorts of spices are added to the meat and vegetables.

2. - Drink.

- *ñeh*: milk - *kola*: buttermilk.

- *cã*: ordinary tea.

- *bhot cã* (*bhot*: Tibet): Tibetan tea. One prepares boiling tea with leaves bought in Tibet. One adds eggs, honey, salt, and *ghĩ*, then pours the lot into a hollow bamboo tube. One holds this between the

thighs and agitates it with a piston with a washer on the end pushed into the hole to mix up the liquid, then one pours it into cups.

- *khoi-pa* (also *khoi-pah*): a kind of beer, and *pa* (also *pah*): a grain alcohol prepared as follows:

One mainly uses the grains of maize, barley, millet and buckwheat. The well-off families also use rice. These grains are dried in the sun on a large mat (*pyoh*). They are then boiled in a large copper pot until the water has evaporated completely. Cooled, they are once more dried in the sun on the *pyoh*. One then mixes in a yeast (*prahm*) which comes in the form of deep chestnut coloured balls. Traditional stories tell how to prepare it but now one can buy it from the merchants in the south. In the winter, one mixes one ball of *prahm* to one *pathi* of grain, in summer four balls of *prahm* to six *pathi*. The grains are then put in a basket for two days in the winter and one in the summer. Then they are poured into a large spherical pot of baked clay and left from 6 to 20 days. The fermented juice left at the bottom is *khoi-pa* which can be consumed as a refreshing drink.

The fermented grains can be eaten. This is what one calls *pah-ke*. If one wants to make grain alcohol (*pa*) one doesn't drink the *khoi-pa* and one pours all the contents of the earthenware pot into a copper pot with a large base. At the centre, on the grains, one places an earthenware pot with a wide neck. One puts the pot on the fire. Another smaller copper pot is put on the rim of the first with wet rags around the base so that the lower pan is completely closed. One fills the upper pan with cold water. The juice of the fermented grains condenses on the bottom of the cold pan and the droplets of condensation fall into the little container which is on top of the grain. The liquid collected is *pa* or *pah*. One changes the water several times so that it stays cold and helps the distillation. So that the *pa* tastes good and is sufficiently alcoholic it is not necessary to change the water more than three or four times. One *pathi* of fermented grain gives four bottles of 75 cl. of good alcohol. It keeps well for a month. If it well corked it can be kept for a long time. It is not very strong alcohol (18o). The price of a bottle of *pa* varies from 1.5 to 2 rupees.

3. - Milk Products.

- *chyugu* (nep. *ghiu*). This is *ghī*, a butter made with the milk of the cow, buffalo, goat or sheep. The milk is boiled then poured into a large wooden pot (*puru*) where it curdles for two or three days. (The liquid obtained can be consumed. This is *dhai* {nep. *dahi*}). One adds water, hot in winter, then one churns it with a stick grooved at its lower end (*mahdi*). The butter rises to the surface; one takes it out by hand. The remaining liquid is called *kola* and is drunk. The butter collected is boiled again until, when sprinkling the surface with some drops of water, one hears a small explosion (*cerar*). The *chyugu* is then poured into a wooden pot, *gapu*, where it is kept while the residue is given to children who eat it with relish. *Chyugu* can be kept for one or two years. Two *pathi* of milk gives one *mana* of *chyugu*. One *mana* is worth 4 rupees.

- *Chudbi* or *chyudbi*. One leaves the milk to curdle. The whey is removed. The white cheese is boiled for a long time and thickened. One makes balls with the creamy paste obtained. The *chyudbi* can be kept for ten days. (An informant told me that it can be kept for up to two months).

4. - Fruits.

These are very rare. The most common is the banana (*machi* [*macha*]) which grows on the lower lands, near the rice fields. There are two varieties: one is very large and not very savoury, the other small and very sweet. The other fruits are wild and are gathered in the thickets and forests (mulberries, plums, strawberries, etc.). Sugar cane can be grown in Gurung country, but the poor soil does not allow it to be grown intensively. The Gurungs consume little sugar. They buy it from the merchants who import it from the south [32].

5. - Utensils.

A number of the utensils used by Gurung women to prepare food are common to all the Nepalese peoples. Plates, bowls, casseroles, ladles etc., are made in bazaars or towns in the southern plains and sold in the mountains.[33]

The traditional Gurung histories only mention five raw materials, gold, silver, iron, copper and wood. Wood, above all, seems to play a very important role. It is replaced nowadays by metal alloys imported from India by the merchants of Pokhara.[34]

Grain alcohol is kept or drunk in wooden pots (*cohña*) decorated with plaques of engraved silver. They are similar to the Tibetan model. *Chyugu* is also kept in wooden pots (*puce*). Milk and *dhai* are poured into large pots. They are all made locally and turned by hand.[35]

The large water pitchers, pots and frying pans are of copper. Until recently, they worked small copper mines throughout the Gurung county. The ore was treated on the spot and the metal produced beaten into the form of kitchen utensils. These are now made in the country to the south. The shapes have changed, but the Gurung names are still kept.

The well-off families have bowls, plates and vessels made of silver. Certain of these vessels contain pure water which is renewed each day.

Amongst the iron objects one must mention the *ćõh* [*cohpa*], a tripod on which the pans are put in order to heat on the fire. It plays an important ritual role in the local religions where the mythical stories describe with precision its manufacture (cf. p. 357).

In Gurung country there are no potters. They are not mentioned in traditional stories. The Gurungs may have known very early on the technique of pottery, but the clay for making pots being rare and of poor quality in the high Himalayan valleys in the centre of Nepal, they preferred to buy pots which were more beautiful and hard-wearing from artisans of the south. Nowadays, all the pots are bought from these artisans who come to sell them in the Gurung villages.

6. - The eating regime.

A Gurung takes two meals a day: one between seven and eight o'clock in the morning , before leaving for the fields, the other between seven and eight in the evening, after work. Around three o'clock in the afternoon, he takes a little sustenance and drinks some tea. Between meals, one often sees the villagers nibbling an ear of maize, or some fruits or watery stem that they find in the fields and forests.

The morning meal and that of the evening are more or less the same.

1. *For a well-off family*:
   Rice or: maize, millet, buckwheat, barley (sometimes as well as rice).
   Vegetables and meat.
   Milk products.

2. *For a poorer family*:
   Maize or: millet, buckwheat, barley. Very rarely rice.
   Vegetables. Rarely meat. A little fried food.
   Milk products.

It seems that the nutritive value of these meals is good. For seven months I have shared food with Gurungs, always eating a little less than them. I was perfectly well in spite of a very active life and long walks.[36]

At mealtimes, the men generally eat first, then the children and the women. The mistress of the house serves herself last. But there is not really a strict rule on the subject except when there is a guest. Only the master of the house eats at the same time as he does. The women and the children eat afterwards.

Finally, it should be noted that when men are not at home they prepare their own food.

E. - FEMALE DOMESTIC TASKS.

All these tasks (except that of weaving) serve to make harvested cereals usable for cooking. This takes up most up most of the women's time when she is at home.

I. - Grinding.

Different kinds of instruments are used for grinding grains.

- Spices, herbs etc. are crushed with a small round pebble on a stone slab. This equipment is not elaborate. However, the use of spices is much less common with the Gurungs than with the peoples of the low lands to the south who eat in the Indian manner.

- Many verandahs shelter a small hand mill (Roman mill) called *rhaẽdo*. It is made of a flat stone fixed to the ground and having a central protuberance. A second stone bored in the centre is placed on top. A vertical handle allows this to be turned on the first stone. Grains are put in the central hole. The flour falls all around the base of the lower stone. Usually, two women sit face to face each holding the handle with her hand to turn the upper grindstone. All grains are ground there but the yield is small and the *rhaẽdo* is only used for little quantities. A neighbour can come and use the mill without payment.

- For larger quantities one uses a water mill, *chedo*, of a type common throughout Nepal. A turbine with radiating blades drives a vertical axis which turns a horizontal, flat, grindstone. A vertical funnel is filled with grain. A small door closes it at the lower end and this is regulated in such a way that the roughness of the grindstone turning makes it open and close periodically, letting out the grain which feeds the mill from time to time. The upkeep of the mechanism is therefore very simple. Many water mills only work in the summer when there is a lot of water in the rivers. The mills belong to individual peasants. It is necessary to pay a fee to use one.[37]

- In each village there is one or more mustard oil mills which are collectively owned (*kol*, nep.). This mill is made of a block of roughly hewn stone put in the ground. The top is flat and bored in the centre with a large conical hole widening out towards the top. A little hole allows the oil to flow into a receptacle which is placed in a large hollow made at the bottom of the stone. A large pestle of wood is put in the upper hole. It is tied to a horizontal bar by a mounting of cords and bent bars. This bar is pushed by one or two women turning around the stone. Slowly the mustard grains put in the central hole are crushed and the oil is extracted. This machine is not used in the monsoon period.

2. - Husking.

Taking the husks off rice is done with a *kuni*, the use of which is very widespread in Nepal [3] A long wooden lever is raised and lowered under the pressure of the foot, making a pestle, covered with a ring of metal, hit rhythmically on the grains of rice placed in a round cavity hollowed in a stone buried at ground level. With a plug of rags on a stick, the person who works the lever by foot continually pushes back the grains which jump out of the hole each time the pestle falls. When the grains are sufficiently beaten, one takes them out of the hole and winnows them in order to separate the husks. There are five *kuni* in Mohoriya. They are owned individually but it is not necessary for anyone to ask permission to use them and they do not have to pay. These *kuni* are often working at three or four o'clock in the morning.

3. - Winnowing.

Winnowing, after husking at the *kuni*, is done with a round, flat, winnowing tray, with a small circular rim. The woman squats holding it with two hands. By a series of extremely precise and various movements (agitating sideways, balancing vertically, shaking on a slanting plane), the woman eliminates stone, minute pieces of straw, and badly husked grains, with astonishing speed.

4. - Weaving.

Undoubtedly, the most original of the Gurung women's skills is that of weaving. They have developed a considerable ability and use a very elaborate technique. Hardly twenty years ago, all the clothes worn by the men were cut from cloth made locally with the fibre obtained from the countryside. All the bedding and woollen capes are still woven in the villages. However, one must recognise that the weaving industry at this point in time is in decline, and there are two reasons for this. The style in clothes is more and more influenced by those of the towns, of India or of Malaya where the Gurung mercenaries are stationed. New

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[3] Cf. L. and D. BERNOT, *Les Khyangs*, p. 19.

cloths tend to oust the product of local industry. However at Mohoriya, out of 94 houses, 62 still weave. Amongst the 32 other houses where weaving is not done, there are 14 Untouchable houses. As a general rule, very few Untouchable women know how to weave and do it. They do not weave wool because their families do not have large flocks of goats or sheep. (The clothes of the male Untouchables, the product of a mixture of Nepalese and European styles and made of imported cloth, are very odd.)

On the other hand, the Gurung women weave less these days as they can only dedicate a very limited amount of their time to domestic work. They have to work all day in the fields in order to replace the manual labour of the absent men.[38]

a) *Materials employed.*

Two local materials are used, *nañi* and wool, and, since quite a recent date, imported cotton from India.

- *nañi* [*nañi*]: nettle textile like chinese grass cloth, is a plant 40 to 50 cm. in height which grows wild. When one cuts *nañi*, at the end of September, it is necessary to wear gloves to protect the hands. When it has been picked, the *nañi* is put into bundles (*cya*) which are beaten on the ground (*sui-ba*). In this way one gets broken pieces *nañi* (*nañi sui*). It is then boiled in big pots with ash. Then it is carried to the river and beaten in the water with a special stick called a *bhōka*. It is then dried in the sun. The *nañi* is again made wet and mixed with little bits of rice chaff (*pui*) then beaten with the *bhōka* [*bhōkai*] (*bhōka ho-ba*). It is then brought back to the house and the usable fibres are separated from the rubbish by "scraping" them (*sir(i)-ba*) with a kind of bamboo tongs with two claws (*ka*). The resultant white fibre (*nañi-si*) is made supple and loosened by hand (*preba*). This is *nañi tim*.

- *wool*: once shorn with a knife, the wool is carried to the spring and washed in a latticed basket, in running water, agitating it with small wooden forks held in each hand. The wool is then dried in the sun and it is then loosened and made flexible by hand (wool-combing).

b) *Spinning* (*ru*: thread).

The *nañi* thread is roughly prepared by hand by pulling on the fibres of a handful of combed *nañi* and twisting it tightly with the fingers wetted with saliva. This process is called *nañi khae-ba*. The following process is common for both wool and *nañi*. This is spinning (*per-ba*). For this one uses a spinning-wheel (*rata*) [4]. The skeins of cotton are wound on a reel (*saco*).

c). *Weaving*.

The loom is of an Oceanian type (fig. 9). It is horizontal, on a continuous warp, the loom bar (*krate*) being fixed onto two stakes (*thor*) whilst the chest bar is held against the waist of the seated weaver by a leather belt (*peto*). The tension of the loom is thus regulated by the backward and forward movement of the worker's torso following the position of the warp (*naśi* or *naśim*). All parts of the loom are made of wood and are unconnected. They can be rolled up with the work in progress and put on one side, hence the usefulness of flexible rods (*krakrem* and *phale phlem*). In order that the width of the piece being woven stays constant, a rod forked at both ends (*krom*) is pricked in on the two sides of the weave to maintain the tension and is moved from time to time to be as near as possible to the threads of the weft most recently passed through. The blade is called *te-śī*. It is used to beat and keep the way open for the passage of the shuttle; *bhõ* is the separating bar. It is preceded or followed by another very fine rod (*mihyarwa*) which serves to separate the threads of the warp into two layers.

The weaver has the soles of the feet resting on a plank (*li-toh*) propped up by a stone. This plank keeps the warp at a constant height. The warp is continuous. The upper layer is called *phi* (*phi*: that which is above), the lower layer, *nõh* (*nõh*: that which is below). The spool

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[4] It is similar to the spinning-wheel of the Far East described by A.LEROI-GOURHAN in *L'homme et la matière*, p. 260. However, this spinning-wheel is not operated by a handle. The index finger of the right hand is pushed into a horizontal hole made in a little board fixed to the axis of the spinning-wheel to make it turn.

(*mihyargõ*) is placed in a shuttle (*uidũ*). The shuttle is rarely used for wool, the spool only being shot across the threads of the warp.

The distance between the chest bar and the loom bar is nearly always fixed. It is 6 *yo-kru* (arms length). The woven piece comes out in two lengths:

- The piece is continuous and measures 12 *yokru* in length. It is cut at the place where one finishes weaving. This is used to make a *kas* (cf. p. 63).

- Usually, one divides the piece into two sections of 6 *yokru* by leaving (for both the 6 *yokru*) a little warp without weft. The piece thus finished is called *tipli* (once). After having cut the two sections, one gets two *pata* of 6 *yokru*. After washing, one piece of 6 *yokru* loses about one *yokru* through shrinkage. The weft has two widths. For wool, it is one *yokru*, for *nañi* and cotton, the border is more often of the linen type: one thread taken, another thread dropped (sometimes two taken, two dropped). This cloth is most often used for *rhañ*. In such a case, two or three pieces are sewn one against the other, lengthwise. The ends are fringed. For the *rhañ*, the centre of the warp has several red threads in it which makes a line of that colour lengthwise. A good *rhañ* is decorated with red and blue embroidery and costs about 15 rupees, as the embroidery takes a long time to do. The cloth is white and never dyed.

The technique for weaving wool is more complex. Four kinds of materials are used: wool of the local sheep, the wool, or rather the hair, of goats, wool made from a mixture of the first two, and the fine wool of the Tibetan sheep [5]. The goats' hair is used to weave blankets with a rough finish. Sheep's wool is generally preferred for weaving.

Three heddles are used, which gives a serge twill or a diagonal design, by combining four threads on three heddles. The first thread is lifted by the first and third heddles, the second by the first, the third by

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[5] This sheep has a very thick outer fleece. But on the inside of the fleece, against the skin, there is a sort of woolly padding which is very fine and very warm. The fleece is combed to separate this padding. Blankets woven with this are very light, soft, and extremely warm. They are expensive.

PLATE XIII

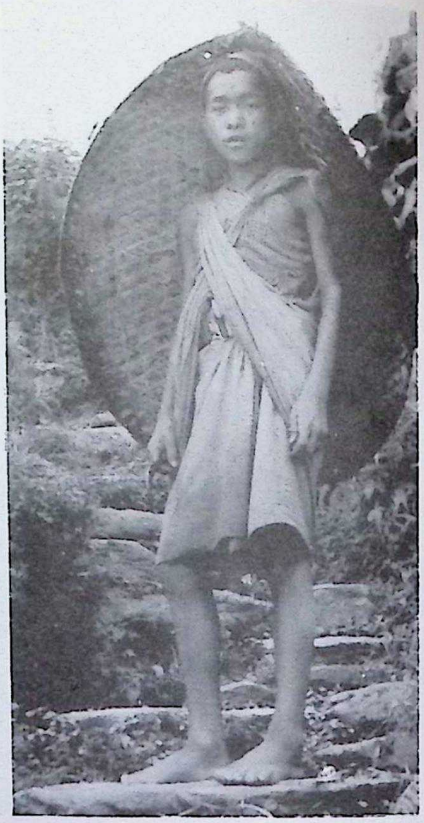
24. Transplanting millet.

25. Preparation of cereal.

PLATE XIV

Basketwork

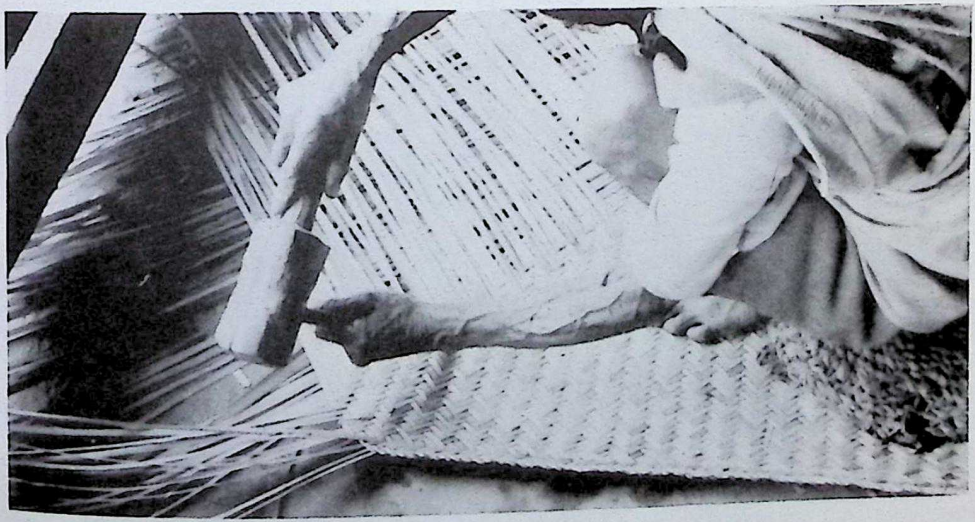
26.



27.

28.

29. Making a carrying basket.



30. Making a *pyoh*, a mat for drying grain on.

31. Dividing buffalo meat into shares.

32. Stripping maize cobs.

the second, the fourth by the second and third. The warp threads are divided into three bands, the central band being of a different colour to the two outer bands. The two colours are repeated in the warp in alternating bands of the same width. Thus one gets a chequerwork of plain or mixed colours. There are a great number of decorative motifs. The wool is never dyed. For the motifs they use the natural colour of the wool, mixing black and white for blankets and light and dark brown for woollen capes (*labru*). Such a cape takes the fleeces of a dozen goats. I

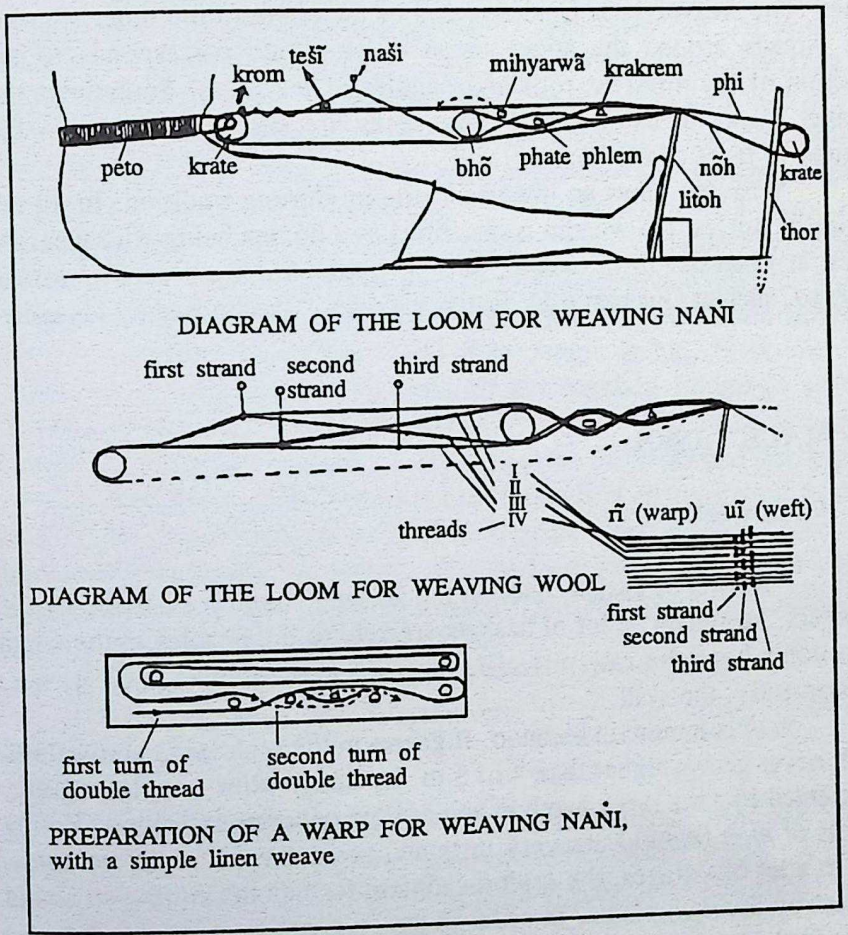


Figure 9 - Weaving

have never found a trace of the technique of dying cloth in the villages I visited nor in the traditional stories which I collected. However the peasants do know about certain plants which can be used to dye leather. But only the Untouchable cobblers (*sarki*) work in leather. Perhaps the technique of dying was brought in by them.

Lastly, a few words about the preparation of the warp (fig. 9). A long plank of wood is pierced with holes at particular points. According to which warp is needed, sticks are inserted in certain of the holes. The weaver goes from one end of the plank to the other putting the threads around the sticks in an order which corresponds to the position of the different rods and heddles of the loom. Sometimes the weaver does not use a plank. The sticks are simply pushed into the ground in front of the house.

Weaving plays an important role in Gurung tradition. In all the mythical stories, the woman is described as a human being who weaves. Then at funerals, for example, she is symbolised by a reel of thread (*sargyo*, ancient Gurung: *toh*), just as the man is symbolised by his knife.

F. - MALE TASKS.

I. - Basketwork.

All sorts of baskets used in the Gurung country are made by the villagers. Moreover, a lot of baskets are sold to the peoples in the south who don't have the raw material, the *mah* [*ma* (*nignala*, nep.)], nor, consequently, the skill.

mah is mountain bamboo. It grows in the high lands above 2500 m. It never grows higher than 4 or 5 m. Its stem is slim, supple, regular, segmented like the large bamboo and hollow between each joint. Young shoots of *mah* (*moutu*) are very tasty and are gathered by the peasants. But in a lot of villages, the *krõh* (headman) forbids the cutting so as not to destroy the *mah* plants. In order to attain a sufficient height, the area is divided into two sections which are alternately cut every two years. Sanctions are taken against those who do not follow these rules. With stone, earth and the wood of large trees, it is the main non-metallic raw

material used by the Gurungs. It is very often used in ritual ceremonies. A fine short length of *mah* knotted into a loose cord is hung from the roof of the verandah just as a horse shoe is in Europe to bring good luck.

mah can be cut at any time of the year but one gathers it mainly in spring before the monsoon. One never cuts it in Asar (mid June to mid July). It is put in large bundles of equal length which one carries vertically on the back. The weight of these bundles often reaches 50 kilos.

Each stem is then split in two lengthwise. The stem is then placed behind the seated basketworker, to pass under his left arm. The left hand pulls it forward little by little. He holds a knife (*kukri*) in his right hand, the blade flat, and splits the *mah* towards him in a jerking fashion, the movements of each hand alternating. Then, by strokes directed towards the centre, each half is split into two or three sections. Each of these is in its turn taken and split in the shape of a bow string into three lengths. The first is thin, slender and very supple. It is formed from the outer skin. One keeps this for making delicate objects, (back-baskets, *syaku*, little baskets for measuring grain). The second length is still more pliable, but thicker. The third length is big, thick and less pliable; it corresponds to the heart of the bamboo (although strictly speaking there is no heart as the centre is empty). One uses this mainly for making the rough trellises which protect the orchards and fields from the animals (chicken, buffaloes etc.). The two first strips are put to soak at the spring and then dried in the sun. They are kept inside the house on the framework below the ceiling. The tar from the smoke which settles on them is an excellent protective agent. Gradually as it is needed, the *mah* thus kept is used for basket making.

The following are descriptions of several things made of basketwork.

- *syaku* [*kh-hun*, gur.]: is a very special sort of "raincoat". It is rather like a small portable roof with two semicircular slopes. A band attached to the inside and next to the edge enables it to be carried with the head. [pl. XIV:26-27]

Making a *śyaku* involves a lot of work, but it can be used for several years. Two semicircular surfaces are first of all made with *mah*

and then joined along their diameter (1 m. 20) in such a manner as to allow them to close one against the other. Two other slightly bigger

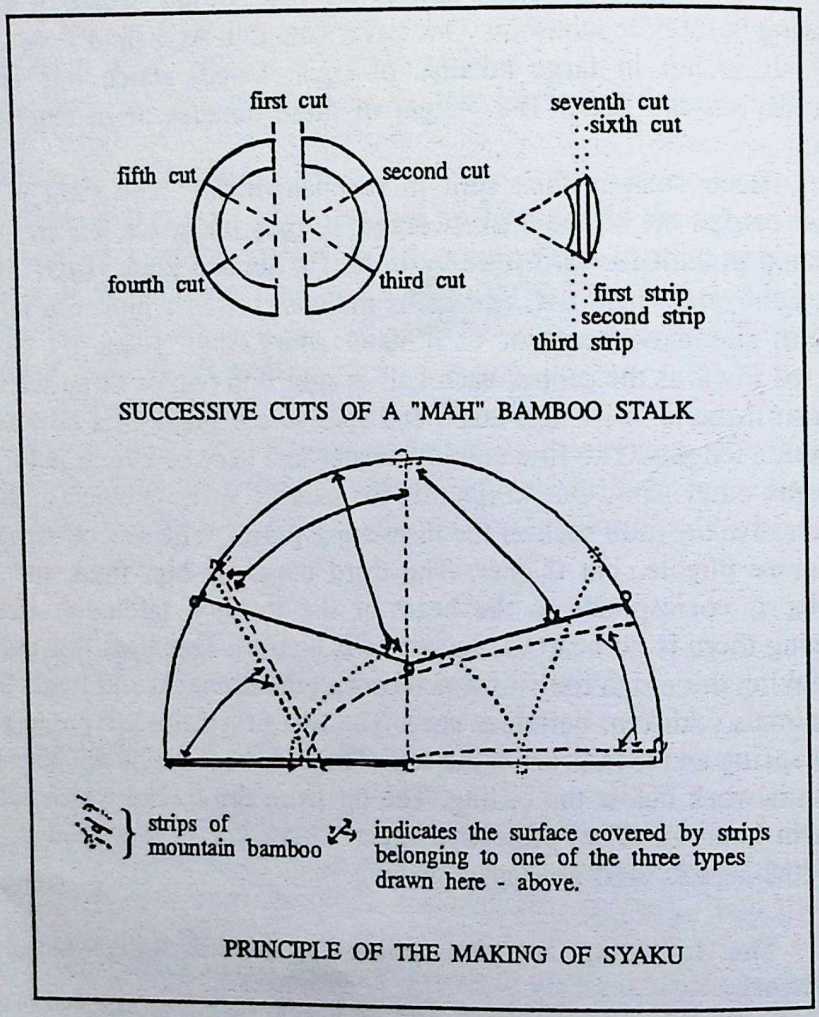


Figure 10 - Basketwork

semicircular surfaces are prepared and joined in the same way, and then fixed onto the first lot. Between the two, closely packed layers of large, dried leaves are enclosed which ensures that the *śyaku* it watertight. The basketwork proper is very complex and demands a lot of skill and experience. A description of it would be difficult and detailed. Figure 10 gives an idea of the way in which the lengths of *mah* are interwoven.

The *syaku* is one of the most representative objects of Gurung techniques. In one of the mythical histories of the *pucu*, the local priests, the *śyaku* is described as possessing a supernatural power at the time of funerals (cf. p. 373).

- *phe* is a back-basket with a square bottom which widens out like a truncated cone. It has a double bottom. There are several varieties of this back-basket. The strips are more or less pressed one against the other or intersected in different ways. The smallest back-baskets are used by children or for carrying small but heavy loads. The biggest are used for carrying large, light loads.

- *pyoh* is a very large mat where the crossing of the strips is very tight (2 or 3 under, 2 or 3 over, loosening part of it at each row, following a crossed diagonal pattern) because it is used for drying cereals in the sun. It has to be four to five metres long at the edge. It takes a long time to make because it is necessary to place each strip by hitting on the outside edge so that the strips join. One uses a wedge and a wooden mallet to do this. [pl. XV:30]

- *cakti* is a sort of round or oval, flat cushion on which one can sit. It is between 30 and 40 cm. in diameter. It is most often made with the leaves surrounding the maize cob when it is picked. It can take the form of a long strip, rounded at both ends, on which several people can sit in a row. The *cakti* is plaited in a spiral which is fastened in a radial manner by working the straw in a figure of eight.[6]

To these objects one could add a long list of mats, such as those made from rice straw (*gundri* nep.), baskets, winnowers, cradles for babies, sieves, etc.

Finally, it should be said that all the ropes are plaited locally with grasses from the forest. Basketworking is still flourishing in the Gurung country. The Siklis and Ghanpokhara regions make the most finely worked and strongest objects.

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[6] *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, p. 275, London, 1954, fig.2.

2. - Weapons and cutting instruments.

There are different types of knives. The two main ones are:

- the *syāgi*, which has a short blade and is used for shearing sheep and goats. It has a small cutting edge.

- the *kukri* (nep.) called *kaca* [*gohcha*] in Gurung (a name which perhaps corresponded long ago to another weapon which has since disappeared). The *kukri* is the national knife of Nepal. M. Leroi-Gourhan[7] has studied the origin of this heavy bladed, short, slightly curved knife, which is neither a dagger nor a weapon for throwing and most resembles a machete. The *kukri* is often carried in a leather sheath and slotted through the belt across the stomach. It is made locally but is more often bought in the bazaars of the southern plains. This knife is also used to cut trees by chopping them, to split *mah*, and to butcher animals. Perhaps because of its curved shape, it is most often used by cutting towards oneself.

Goats, sheep and chickens are killed by decapitation. The blood is collected and consumed. We will see later that many of these animals are killed either as sacrifices to certain favourable gods or ancestors or in exchange for a soul imprisoned by an unlucky spirit. Buffaloes are first of all hit on the top of the head with a mallet and then decapitated. Once the beast is cut up it is sold. Forty or fifty families get together to buy a share in a buffalo and for the butchering (120-200 rupees). The division of the animal is quite original. Each family gets an equal cut of shoulder, lung, liver, hoof, bone etc. This procedure involves cutting up each part of the beast and considerable work in dividing it. It is therefore impossible to get a large portion of meat in a single piece. This is not a disadvantage for the Gurung cook because the meat is quite expensive and is only served in small quantities, cut into thin pieces and carefully made to last for several meals. The meat is smoked to keep it more easily. It is thought of more as a seasoning to go with the rice than a meal in itself. [pl. XVI:31]

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[7] LEROI-GOURHAN, *Milieu et techniques*, p. 18, XVII.

Once upon a time the bow (*talı* [*dhalī*]) was the weapon most often used for hunting. Within the last fifty years the gun has replaced it. The bow plays a role in certain religious rites to hunt and to frighten evil spirits. It is made of *mah*, including the bow string. It can be used to shoot a pointed arrow (*me*) (for hunting, one covers the point with a little poison), or to shoot a small, round stone to kill birds. In this case the bow has a plaited bow string.

A small sickle with a curved blade is much used by men and women. It is used for harvesting, for carving small wooden objects, cutting meat and pealing vegetables. [39]

3. - Hunting.

Gurungs passionately love hunting. For them, the act of hunting is far more important than the fact of catching something. There are two kinds of hunting. Around the cultivated area of the village they hunt birds. The gun is very rarely used. The villagers set traps made of small supple stems of *mah* or fine thread. They are hidden in the vegetation on the ground, or on a branch, and the bird is caught and strangled. The men and young boys never tire of this amusement. The other hunting takes place in the highlands. This is for large game. Hunting is called *pho klõ-ba*, *pho* is the generic term for red deer, mouse deer, etc.; *klõ-ba* means to hunt, to play. (One often uses *klõ-ba* to describe a child playing).

A hundred years ago they hunted with a bow and poisoned arrows. They would have had beaters and hunters stationed in hiding places on the paths where the game usually walked. Now they hunt with the gun, often without beaters, as the men generally leave to hunt in groups of four or five, usually for several days, two or three days walk from the village.

G. - MEDICINE.

As in Tibet, Gurung pharmacology is very rich. Even nowadays, the local medicine is the only kind used. At Pokhara, which is two days walk away, there are two hospitals, but the population of the Modi Valley still do not feel like using them. The distance and the cost of

treatment are very often the two determining factors which prevent the ill person from going to hospital.

Many local remedies are known by both men and women. Certain others are the specialities of the *pucu* and *klihbrĩ* (local priests).

The following are several common remedies:

- *For headaches - kra na-ba* (*kra*: head; *na-ba*:to be ill): one uses a root (*sutuba*) which one grates and mixes with a little water to make into a cream. This is put on the temples and the forehead, then small pieces of thin paper are fixed over it so that when the cream dries it will not fall off. In the case of a hangover from grain alcohol, it is good to eat a little. For a headache, one can also use a plant called *patcu* which one finds in the high pastures, in the same way. *biyĩ* is used as well for this.

- *Fever -(jāro*, nep.): one crushes the shoots of *pala*, (*aisilo*, nep.) and mixes them with water. One boils the liquid. One can also make a cream from the root of the *bhot guyāli* (*daindalo*, nep.). This medicine soothes a tongue puffed up by an abscess.

- *Stomach-ache - pho na-ba* (*pho*: stomach): one fries a crushed fruit called *kutu* (*siltimur*, nep.) in *ghĩ*. Then one boils it in salted water and drink the resulting infusion. One can also eat a cooked vegetable called *yopla-kuta* (literally: "that which has the form of a hand") (*kalonibro*, nep.).

- *Dysentery - cherdi-ba*: one crushes a fruit called *tipur* [*prum*] (*bakimba*, nep.) which is drunk with water.

- *Tape-worm and other worms - pepe ta-ba*: one uses the nut of a fruit called *pēceli* which grows in the high pastures. The nut is crushed and mixed with water. One drinks it all. One can also drink a mixture of wood ash and water (*me-brõ kyu - me-brõ*: ash; *kyu*: water).

- *Burns and cuts - me-ji krõ-ba* and *yo tho-ba* (*me-ji*: with fire; *krõ-ba*: to burn; *yo*: hand; *tho-ba*: to cut) : one puts a cream of *yokri nhakya* (*pancoule*, nep.) on the wound; *meram-śĩ* can be used as a

substitute for this plant. Finally the powdered, dried lungs of a chicken can be sprinkled on a burn or cut.

- *Coughs - pyõ-ba*: the best remedy is the yellow powder of *besar* (nep.) dissolved in water. The liquid is boiled and drunk.

- *Lungs* (respiratory troubles): fresh blood of game such as the *tõsar, pitkla, tõgi*, is recommended. One can also dry and grind to powder the stomach of a porcupine. The powder is dissolved in water and then the mixture is drunk.

- *Skin infections* (*lutu*): one applies a cream made from wood ash, mustard oil, water and powder found inside old batteries, to the infected skin.

- *Eye trouble - mih na-ba* (*mih*: eye): the skin of a fruit called *gome* is boiled with a little water. The eyes are bathed with the mixture. If the eye has been pierced by a small piece of wood, a little breast milk from a woman put on the graze soothes the eye. [40]

H. - WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The following is a list of the different measures used by the Gurungs and cited in this study.

Measures of length:

- *yokru* (or *yokur*): cubit, arm's length.

- *yo-kri plhi*: (*yo-kri*: fingers; *plhi*: four): the width of four fingers of the hand without the thumb.

- *bittah* (nep. *bittā*): span

- *murhe*: length of the forearm.

- *janjir* (nep.): English chain: 9 feet 3 inches [8]; 2 m 90 cm.: 6 *yokru* less 1 *bittah*.

Measures of area.

- *kloh*: rectangle of 3 *yokru* X 2 *yokru* or 6 *yokru* square.

- *muri* (nep.): a square of 4 *janjir* a side which makes 16 *janjir* square.

Measures of volume of grain (nep.).

- *muthi* (nep.): one handful of rice.

- *mana* (*mānā*, nep): ten handfuls of rice = 10 *muthi* = 1 pint (?) [9]: 57 cl.

- *pathi* = 8 *mana*.

muri = 20 *pathi*.

Measures of weight.

- *ser*: almost 1 kilo.

- *dharne*: 3 *śer*.

- *tola*: measure for gold and silver 1/76 *śer*[10]. The goldsmiths of Mohoriya count differently.

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[8] P. LANDON, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 255.
[9] P. LANDON, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 255.
[10] P. LANDON, *op. cit.*, vol I, p. 255.

Measures of money.

- 1 *mohr*: 1/2 rupee.

- [1 *mahee*: 1 rupee.]

- 1.6 Nepalese rupees (Rp. N. C. = Rp. Nepali Currency) = 1 Indian rupee (Rp. I. C.) in 1958.

CHAPTER III

AGRICULTURE

In this chapter, I will deal with agriculture, including a study of animal husbandry. Although most of the information used was collected in the upper valley of the Modi, this study gives a more or less exact insight into the agriculture in all the Gurung country. I was able to check this by visiting other valleys, and will indicate the variations in passing. As no official report has been written, the statistical documentation which I have used is fairly limited, as none of the land has been measured and the area of village lands not calculated. In his village, the Gurung is almost exclusively a cultivator and animal breeder, so I will attempt to specify the social aspects of agriculture, aspects which, under certain recent influences, such as the massive departure of men to the army, are being transformed.

A. - INFLUENCE OF THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

Gurung agriculture is conditioned by the relief, soils, climate and hydrography of the region. Let us recall these features.

The agriculture is of the mountain type. The terraced fields rise in tiers between 1400 m. and 2300 m., on the steep slopes of the valleys running north to south. The highest villages in the valleys have settled their lands in groups of terraces, at an altitude from 1800 m. to 2600 m. Erosion is severe, the shape of the fields is continually changing. The soils are of very variable quality and types, running from stony, schistoid and poor to the alluvial soils at the bottom of the valleys; this leads to a great diversity of cultivation.

The country has the monsoon climate of Asia, the rainfall during the hot season, from the beginning of June to the end of October, is quite heavy. The altitude affects the climate, causing snowfalls which cover the higher lands of the villages during the winter, in December and January, and light showers in February and March. Winter and summer are very distinct. It frequently freezes in winter, while the temperature rises to 30° during the summer. The lands being terraced at many levels, the same village is subject to the influence of several climates. During the summer, the bottom of the valleys have a subtropical climate which is extremely hot and humid, while the summit of the ranges are well aired, enjoying moderate temperatures during the day, which cools off a lot during the night. In winter, this zone is very cold and often covered in snow while the lower lands remain warm, enveloped in dry air.

These climatic conditions create a very diversified agriculture, with a period of great activity during the growing season in the hot, wet weather, and a period of calmer agricultural activity in the cold, dryish season. This pattern is itself complicated by the climatic differences felt even during the same season, due to the position of the fields.

A river drains the water of each valley. During the dry season, the slopes being little irrigated, the streams are dried up. When the monsoon arrives, they rush furiously, filled with alluvial soil. It is along these streams and the river at the bottom of the valley that the irrigated agriculture occurs in the hot and humid season.

B. - DIVISION OF LAND.

The village of Mohoriya is divided into a large number of sites (fig. 12) each having a different name. These sites may be classed under two major headings: "Irrigated lands" for the cultivation of rice and "dry lands" for very varied cultivation.

I. - Irrigated Lands.

These are found on the lower slopes of the mountain; *āri* and *bhyāsi* (I) lie in terraces on the alluvial soil of the convex bank of one of bends of the Modi. The difference in levels between the higher and lower terraces is slight but is sufficient for gravitational irrigation, utilising the

water of the streams and waterfalls which are spaced out all along the valley on the lower slopes during the monsoon; *yuprõ* (Ib) is situated along a stream and is composed of terraces constructed on fairly rich but steep land.

These lands are called *mlah-morõ* (*mlah*: husked rice; *morõ* or *mrõ*: fields), that is to say "rice fields". Rice is in fact the only cultivation that is undertaken there, once a year, for the unfertilised land cannot produce two crops despite the fertility of the alluvial soil.

The total area of these fields increases each year. New terraces are constructed on the first steep slopes above the *bhyãsi* and *ãri* encroaching upon *khore*. The land there is less rich, but can be irrigated by diverting the water from one of the streams flowing down the slope. The unit of measure for the rice fields is the *muri* which is equivalent to 16 square *janjirs*, that is to say 105.70 m^2.[1]

2. - Dry lands.

These are called *pakh-morõ* [*pakh-mrõ*] (*pakho*, nep.). They form the majority of the lands in Mohoriya, extending from the rice fields as far as the wooded strip which covers the top of the range. They are terraced on steep slopes, in strips generally running north-south, separated by a screen of undergrowth or trees when the slope is so steep that no terrace can be constructed. In the central part of the area, there is a large stretch of stony ground, *kyuwadhũ*, covered in scanty, poor vegetation, where all the springs from which water is obtained by the village are found.

A large number of these dry lands have been gradually cleared for the first time during the last forty years, according to the needs of the growing population, to the detriment of the forests. A most complex system of walling is constructed to prevent the cattle from getting into the cultivated areas during the period of growth and harvesting of crops. The walls are built with the innumerable stones which are scattered over the fields.

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[1] LANDON, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

C. - THE SYSTEM OF THE CYCLE OF CULTIVATION.

In order to deal with the numerous problems which the physical geography poses, the villagers have developed a very complex system of cultivation cycles. A study of the system of rotation of crops allows us to distinguish the sub-divisions in each of the two large groups of irrigated and dry lands.

I. - Rotation of crops in the irrigated lands.

- *bhyāsi, āri* (I) (see fig. 11 and 12).

During all the cold season the land rests. Then, from the beginning of July to the 1st November for *āri*, and 15th November for *bhyāsi*, one ploughs, sows, transplants and harvests rice. However, the season of cultivation varies with the arrival of the monsoon. In 1958, it was late; the transplanting was not finished until mid-July. From December to February, one drives herds of cows to pasture in the rice stubble. This is the only manuring that the fields get.

- *yuprō* (IB)

This land being higher, it must be harvested before the 15th October, and, as a consequence, the transplanting of rice is begun much earlier.

From the 15th May, the stream which crosses *yuprō* supplies enough water to allow for the sowing of grains of rice and for flooding them. The cattle spend a few days there, from 15th November to 1st December, on the way down to the *bhyāsi* and *āri*.

The cultivation cycle of the rice lands does not extend over the whole of one year.

2. - Rotation of crops in the dry lands.

- *khore* (II).

The slope being very steep, one cannot build terraces. One year in two, all the vegetation is cleared, leaving the numerous trees so that their roots can hold the soil which so easily erodes. The millet is sown directly about the 15th May. It is not transplanted but weeded and thinned out. The harvest takes place about the 15th November. The land

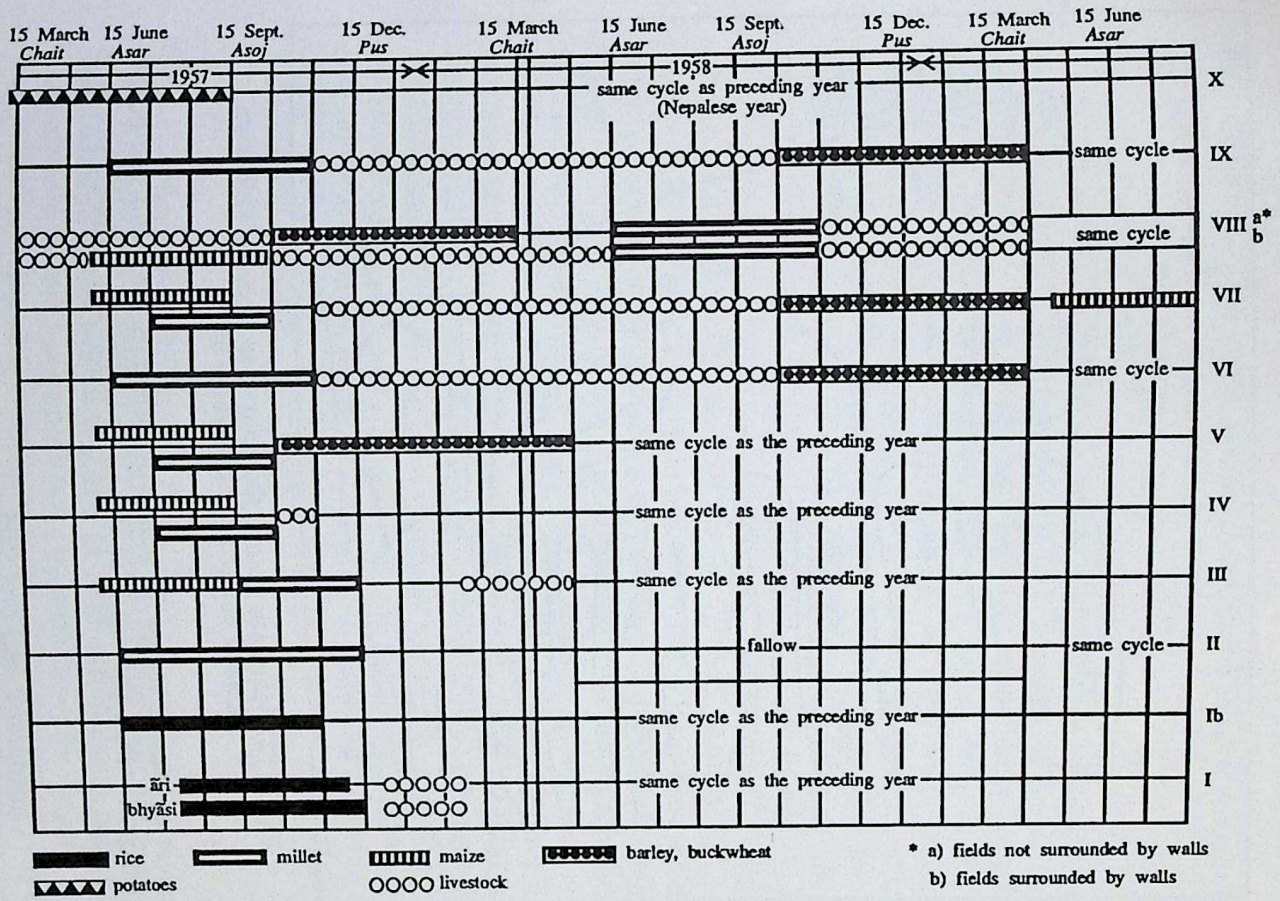

Figure 11 - Agricultural Cycles of Mohoriya

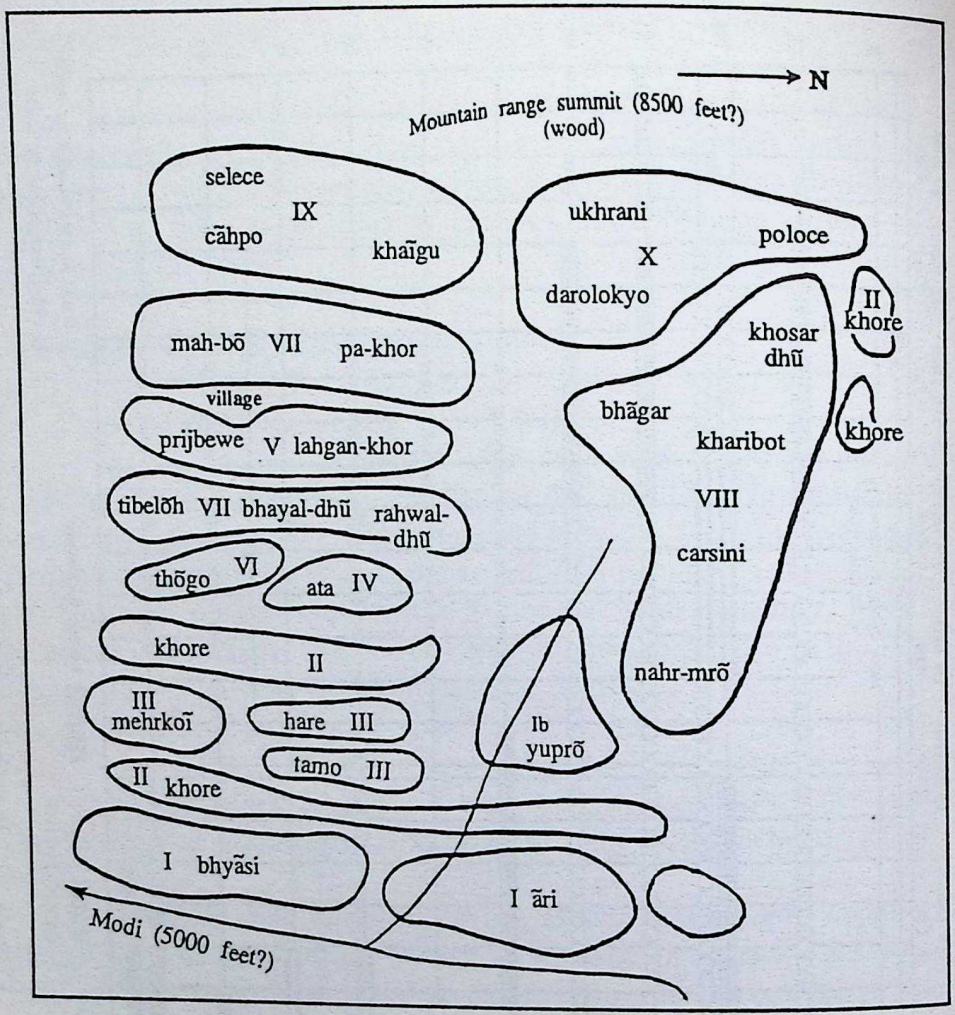

Figure 12 - Schematic Plan of the Cultivated Areas of Mohoriya (Roman numerals refer to those in Fig. 11)

receives no manure except the humus deposited by the plants and bushes which grow when the soil is resting, and which are burnt before it is used again.

- *tamo, hare, mehrkoĩ* (III).

These fields are well shaded and have a sub-tropical climate during the summer. From 1st May to 15th August (the growth is a little more rapid in *mehrkoĩ*), the maize sprouts, then, after a rapid digging over, the millet is transplanted immediately. It is harvested about the

15th November. The cattle pasture there from February to mid-April when coming up from the rice fields.

- *ata* [*ãta*] (IV).

The hot season comes to an end sooner than in *tamo*. The millet harvest is therefore earlier (about the 15th October). A human factor intervenes here. It is not possible to transplant all the millet at the same time. The peasants are therefore forced to stagger their work. The transplanting of the millet starts about the 1st July, while the maize which was sown at the beginning of May is still in the ground and is not cut until about the 15th August. The cattle pass through *ata* from 15th October to the 1st December while going down towards the *bhyãsi* and *ãri*.

- *lahgan-khor, prijbewe* (V).

These fields extend up to just below the village. The land there is rich and well manured since it is easy to carry dung accumulated in the village stables, in back-baskets. The climate is gentle, but the frost begins to make itself felt during the night from the end of September. Twelve months out of the twelve, the crops succeed each other and give three harvests. Maize grows from May to mid-August. From the 15th June, millet is transplanted in the shadow of the maize stalks. It is ripe about the 15th September. The land is very rapidly turned over and barley and buckwheat (*karu, karsi*) are sown. They stay in the ground all the winter. The light rains and the sun of March and April ripens them. On the 15th April, the land is free for the manuring and the hard work of spring before the return of the same cycle.

- *thõgo* [*thõgõ*] (VI).

This part of the village has rather poor soil. Its cycle of cultivation is staged over two years. In 1957, for example, millet was planted there in mid-May which was ripe about the 15th August. From that date to mid-September 1958, herds of cows graze there. From 15th September to 15th March 1959, barley and buckwheat will be grown there. Then the cycle started again.

- *tibelõh, rahwal-dhũ, bhayal-dhũ, pa-khor, mah-bõ* (VII).

The cultivation cycle of these fields is staggered over three years. In 1957, maize and millet were grown, as in lands V, thanks to good manuring, maize from 1st May to 15th August, millet from 15th June to 15th September. From 15th October 1957 to mid-September 1958, the cattle manure these fields. Then barley and buckwheat will be sown there and harvested about 15th March 1959. At the beginning of May, maize will be sown, and harvested in about mid-August. The land rests during the passage of herds of cows, until May 1960 when the cycle will start again with the sowing of maize, then that of millet about the 15th June. These lands are not fertile enough to give a harvest of maize and millet every year.

- *kharibot, khosar-dhũ, bhãgar, carsini, nahr-morõ* [*nahr mrõ*] (VIII).

The fertility of these lands is a little less good than that of VII. In 1957, the cattle were pastured there until September. Then in mid-September, barley and buckwheat were sown which were harvested in mid-March 1958. About the 15th May, millet was transplanted and will grow until the 15th October. On this date, the cattle will return and will remain until September 1959, the two year cycle starting again. Certain fields in this part of the village are surrounded with walls to protect the crops from the cattle while they are there. There the cycle of cultivation is different. During 1957, although the cattle were in the surrounding fields, maize was sown about the 1st May which was ripe by mid-September. Then the flocks came to pasture until 15th May 1958, the date when the millet is transplanted, which is harvested about the 15th October. Then after another passage of cattle, the cycle starts again with the maize.

- *khaĩgu, cãhpo* [*chyãpo kharka*], *selece* [*sẽle chaĩ*] (IX).

These lands are in a rather cold and windy region. Although they are fertile enough, they are not able to give two harvests per year and have a cultivation cycle like that of VI. In 1957, from the 15th May to 15th October, millet was cultivated. Then cattle were kept there until September 1958, the date from which barley and buckwheat are cultivated, until 15th April, the harvest of these two cereals being

delayed by the harsh winter climate which stays longer here than in *thõgo* VI.

- *poloce, darolokyo*[*?*], *ukhrani* (X).

Many of these fields have been recently cleared. The climate is cold during the winter and the nights during the summer are very fresh. During the monsoon, sunshine is much reduced, as this region is continuously plunged in cloud. There is only one annual crop here, that of potatoes, planted about the 1st March and dug up in mid-August.

While VIII is sown with millet, VII and IX are fallow and the cattle live there. This permits a regular harvest of millet in the village. If one refers to the diagram (fig. 12), one sees that VIII is found to the north of the village, while VII and IX are to the south of VIII. Thus each year, a half of these lands at the middle altitude are cultivated while the others are occupied by cattle. The years which I have given as examples (1957, 1958, 1959) correspond to the cycle which is followed during these three years. Why is there a distinct grouping of lands VIII on one part, and VII and IX on the other? The cattle are the reason. It is in fact easy to keep the herds on one or two large expanses of land and to surround them with walls or brushwood to prevent the animals from damaging the neighbouring crops. This is above all true for section VIII which is a little outside the village, cut off to the south by a large area of stony, uncultivated land. VIII and IX also have the advantage of being directly in contact with the woods which cover the high lands to the west where the cattle may easily go to pasture.

D. - CULTIVATION.

I. - Rice.

There is only one crop of rice per year, as the climatic conditions do not permit the flooding of the land except during the monsoon. The earth is turned over once after the sowing of the maize is finished. Then several fields in which the rice plants will be grown are flooded as soon as the first rains have swollen the streams which come down from the mountains. The date of this operation is very variable. In 1958, the work was done at the beginning of June for the year was particularly dry. When the rice plantation is flooded, one ploughs, then one breaks up the

earth and levels it with a horizontal bar fitted with two vertical hooks which scratch the mud, which is pulled by a pair of oxen. Then the grains of rice are sown. At the same time, the walls of the terraces are repaired where they have deteriorated and the plants which threaten to loosen the stones are cleared. When the flow of water in the streams is sufficient to flood all the rice fields, the transplanting starts. Ploughing, breaking up and levelling follow each other; then, immediately afterwards, the rice is transplanted. Channels bring the water from the streams to the rice fields. There it accumulates until it is level with the barrier of earth constructed on the outside edge of the terrace, then it disperses and flows onto the terrace below.

In mid-August, the weeds suffocating the rice plants and those which push between the stones of the walls holding up the terraces are pulled up. From the 1st November, the rice harvest starts at *ãri*, then continues to *bhyãsi*. The rice is threshed on the spot. At *yuprõ*, the period of cultivation of the rice is earlier, mainly because one uses rice "for dry cultivation" which needs less water than the rice of *bhyãsi* and *ãri*.

Here is a list of the varieties of rice used at Mohoriya:

- *tar sinjyani* [*tar sinjali*] (the most common)
- *ola* [*ol-mlah*] (good producer; yielding 50% when husked)
- *genowa* [*jhinuwa*] (tasty)
- *tagmare* (50% when husked)
- *mlõgya* (50% when husked)
- *sinjyala* [*sinjali*] (eaten by worms if kept for two years; good yield when husked)
- *gorura* (at *bhyãsi*)
- *jermani* (at *bhyãsi*; good yield)
- *anerimarsi* (at *bhyãsi*; good yield)
- *golkote* (in the high lands; ripens very slowly)
- *bhaĩse gorura* (medium yield)
- *mosinu gorura* (small grain and fine skin)
- *rumani* (tasty)
- *ghaye* [*ghaeeya*] (rice for dry cultivation)
- *tar darmali* (in the high lands)
- *ããdi* (cooks quickly)
- *sinjyali darmali* (good yield; at *ãri*)

2. - Maize.

The cultivation of maize allows many families to feed themselves while waiting for the rice to ripen. The fields are cleaned at the beginning of April; the walls of the terraces are repaired. Then the ploughing and the sowing succeed each other during the several light showers at the beginning of spring. The heat is not too great and the earth is soft. From mid-May, the maize plants are cleaned and earthed up. A second hoeing takes place when the millet is transplanted in the shadow of the maize. The cobs are taken off between the 15th August and 15th September. In the fields planted with millet, the stems are cut close to the earth. In those where the millet is only transplanted after the harvesting of the maize, the stems are pulled out. The cobs are carried to the villages in large back-baskets. The stems that are still green are given to the cattle. There is a great number of varieties of maize. Some of them give two and three cobs per plant, above all the "America" which is of very recent introduction. Inconveniently, it has very high stems which break before the complete maturation as a result of the violent winds which occasionally accompany the monsoon.

3. - Millet.

The sowing of millet takes place in the first half of the month of May and from the beginning of June. The plants are transplanted in the shadow of the maize stems from when the first rains of the monsoon fall. This operation takes place during the months of June and July and ends in *tamo* at the beginning of August. The land is carefully weeded, the grasses are pulled up and the millet plants are transplanted out with their stems in the earth, which makes them easier to hoe. The harvest takes place between 15th September and 15th November, depending on when the millet was transplanted, and the temperature and the degree of humidity in the surrounding air.

4. - Barley and buckwheat.

The growth of these cereals is much longer for they are growing during the winter season. Sowing starts in mid-September, before the

first frosts have made themselves felt. The harvesting takes place between 15th March and 15th April.

5. - Others.

Many other secondary crops are cultivated in Mohoriya; potatoes in the highest lands, beans, vegetables, spices, onions, and mustard, in the orchards adjoining the houses or in several fields around the village. Beans and other vegetables are often mixed in with the cultivation of maize and millet. The fields are richly manured twice a year, and simultaneously produce two and three harvests of different plants [41].

E. - OPERATIONS.

I. - Manuring.

Only the dung of animals is used, either of the large cattle, or of chickens, goats and sheep, which accumulates in the stables in the village. The manuring is done in two ways:

- The herds of cows and oxen are led onto the fields to manure them and remain there for several weeks, enriching the land with their dung. The manure is piled up near to the shelter in the open field where the cattle spend the night, and is then spread onto the land. This manure is composed almost entirely of dung. It loses much of its value for it dries on the top in the sunlight without the enrichment fermentation produces.
- The manure accumulated at the village in the buffaloes' stables, the sheep folds and the hen houses, is carried in back-baskets and spread on the fields near to the village, in particular at *lahgan-khor* and *prijbewe* and in the orchards. Because of the lack of appropriate pits, the fertilising element of the urine is almost entirely lost.

2. - Ploughing and sowing.

The ploughing of springtime is always preceded by the repair of the walls of the terraces which water undermines and rapidly destroys during the monsoon. A swing-plough is used made of a plough-beam, a handle and a massive wooden plough-shear, covered at the thin end (shoe) with a protective iron point. The swing-plough is pulled by a pair of small black oxen, bearing the yoke in front of their withers. The furrows are made following the curves of the level ground, parallel to the walls of the terrace. The operation consists of turning the plough at the end of the field, often made difficult by the narrowness of many of the terraces. The ploughman must lift the swing-plough above the terrace below, like a flying buttress, which he does on the outside edge of the field.

Maize is sown by hand by a person following the plough, in the furrow which will be covered over by the next passage of the plough. The sowing of millet is done with great precision. The earth is turned over by hoe, then broken up and levelled by hand, checking the irrigation channels for the flow of water. The grains are sown by hand, evenly spread and then covered with a fine layer of earth. To keep the soil fresh and damp, the seedlings are often covered with fern leaves.

3. - Transplanting, banking up and weeding.

The millet or rice plants to be transplanted are carried in bundles in the back-baskets. The earth is cleaned of weeds and broken up with a hoe for the millet. It is ploughed, mixed and levelled for the rice. The plant is held in the hand and slid obliquely into the dry or flooded land. Maize is cleared of weeds and earthed up with a hoe when its roots are strong enough. The weeding of millet and rice is done with a very small hoe. All this work is done by a line of workers, moving backwards when transplanting, forwards when earthing up and weeding, following the bends in the level ground of the terrace.

4. - Harvesting.

The harvesting of maize consists of walking in the middle of the plants, taking off the cobs from the stems and throwing them into a

basket carried on the back. When this is filled, it is carried to the village. There, the cobs can be treated in two ways. Generally the covering of six cobs is taken off and they are tied together (only the best cobs are chosen). Then, the bunches of six cobs are hung across strips of wood, fixed horizontally to the ceiling of the ground floor of the house, to dry. They can also be hung outside. For this, long bamboo poles are fixed vertically in the ground and joined together at about 2.5 m. from the earth by horizontal strips, then the bunches of cobs are piled up over the strips. When the construction is finished, it is covered with a thick roof of thatch and leaves. Thus protected against the rain, the cobs are kept without rotting. The other cobs are immediately shelled and dried in the sun, then the grains are stored in the granary of the house. Cereals are all cut with a sickle (*asi* [*ãsi̇*]). The ears are tied into bundles and piled up to dry for a few days.

5. - **Threshing.**

Rice is threshed in the fields. A group of men form a circle round a pile of rice heads and beat it rhythmically with long sticks, turning slowly around the threshing floor. The other cereals are carried in sheaves to the village. The heads are cut off with a sickle, then beaten on the terraces of the houses as described for rice. For winnowing, a round winnowing tray is used which is filled with grains mixed with little bits of chaff, and slowly, by little shakes, the contents are allowed to fall the height of a man. The heavy grains pile up at the feet of the winnower while the fine, very light, chaff is taken by the light puffs of wind and accumulates a little further off. The winnower then squats to do it a second time.

F. - LABOUR.

I. - Movement between village-fields-village.

Many of the fields are a long way from the houses, and the villagers are in the habit of spending many weeks away, living in huts built in the middle of the fields. These temporary migrations across the

village lands are shown in a series of moves from the village to the fields at the bottom of the valley and up to the village again.

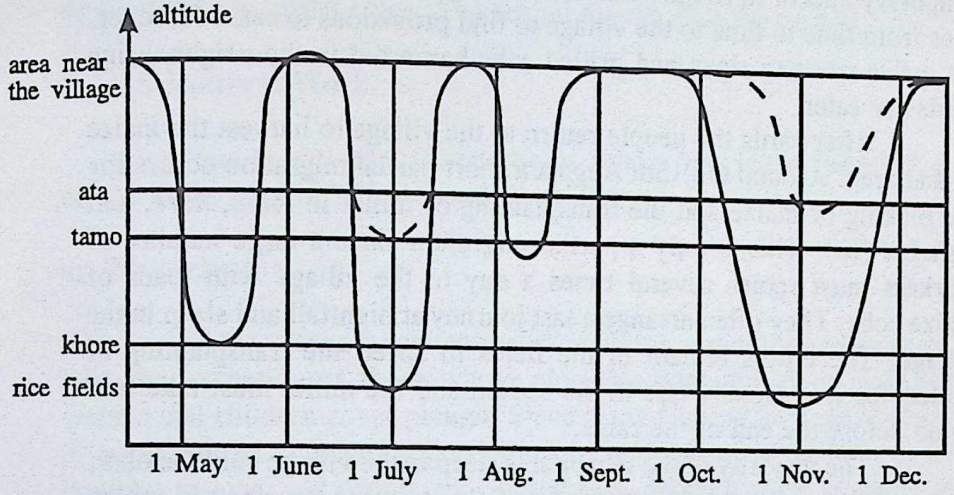

Figure 13 - Movements between village-fields-village

The growth of the crops is faster in the warm, humid climate of the lower lands than in the fresher climate of the village region and the high lands. This phenomenon is the key to the movements of peoples in Mohoriya.

Maize is first of all sown in the land around the village (V, VI, VIII). The peasants spend the day outside and sleep at night in the village. Then III, IV are sown. Usually the workers do not return at night to the village, thus avoiding the necessity of moving the pair of oxen twice. When maize is sown, the land in II is turned over again with a hoe, and millet is sown; the poorer families who mainly own these lands spend several days without returning to the village. During the same period, rice planting begins in *yuprō* (IB), in the dry fields, millet is sown in *thōgo* (VI). Thus, until about 1st July, the inhabitants work near the village. It is then that the big migration begins. It is a double migration, the one making towards zone IV to transplant millet and to weed the plants in *khore*, the other towards the rice fields. Entire families stay there for ten to twenty days without returning to the village (in 1958, a relatively dry year, the transplanting of rice took three weeks). The work must be done quickly in order that the rice should ripen at the

same time. There is no question of wasting precious hours in the morning and evening by returning to sleep in the house. Families live in temporary huts or in rough permanent houses. One member of the family goes from time to time to the village to find provisions to eat. Moreover, the maize starts to ripen and grilled cobs harvested in the neighbouring fields are eaten.

Afterwards the people return to the village to harvest the maize in that area. Around the 15th August a short partial migration occurs for the picking of maize and the transplanting of millet in *tamo*, *hare*, and *mehrkoī* (III). This is only a partial migration since a large number of workers must return several times a day to the village with loads of maize cobs. They often arrange a last journey at nightfall and sleep in the village. The others remain in the fields to speed the transplanting of millet, for it is already late in the season and the millet must take root again before the end of the rains.

The majority of the inhabitants sleep in the village until October; although they go to work in the lower fields to weed the rice and millet, they prefer to return in the evening to the house as the work is not very urgent. The second great migration takes place in November to harvest the millet and rice in fields I, II, III, IV, and V, starting on sections IV and V, which ripen sooner, about 15th October. This migration is longer but less complete than that in July, for, as we have seen with maize, certain people must return to the village carrying baskets filled with rice and millet. From the 15th November to the beginning of May, the population of Mohoriya lives in the village. It is the dead season.

I have visited other regions where this phenomenon is more accentuated. They possess more rice fields and the difference in altitude between the village and lower lands is greater. This is the case in Kõta, the last village in the Modi Valley, situated three hours walk from Mohoriya. In several villages another reason explains this migration; this is the snow-cover of the area in winter. This is the case in Ghanpokhara, a large village, situated on the summit of a high range in the Lamjung area. From November to April, nearly all the inhabitants live in the bottom of the valley, the village being for several weeks covered with snow and a freezing wind blowing. In January and February men climb up to the village to go up to the high lands to get a supply of wood for the monsoon season. From mid-June to mid-August, the peasants go down again to transplant rice and millet and to cut the maize.

Ghanpokhara is, in fact, two agglomerations which are inhabited alternatively; the higher village is better arranged and organised, the lower village is scattered, but many of the houses are as well built as those at the top of the ridge. The school moves with the people.

2. - Agricultural Work.

Now, to answer three questions. Who works in the fields? How do the peasants work? How are they paid?

a) *The workers.*

All the village inhabitants work at all the agricultural operations, with the exception of those whose physique does not allow it. Thus women and children never plough. Since many Gurung men are soldiers or work abroad, a large proportion of the agricultural tasks have to be done by women, old people and adolescents. Women work as much as men, but if hard work has to be undertaken, it is a man who is in charge. In principle, he also organises the work, but when the head of the household lives abroad, it is the woman who has the responsibility of deciding when and how the agricultural operations should be done.

Gurungs and Untouchables do the same work. Untouchable men are mainly given the most exhausting tasks. They plough the land of the rich villagers. Such villagers lack male labour for two reasons. They have many fields. Even if all the population was in the village, they would have to employ extra labour. Furthermore, the male family members of these families are often soldiers abroad. The rich Gurung land owners must therefore employ day labourers and, like other Gurung families lacking labour, they use the Untouchables who are not enlisted in foreign armies. But if a Gurung looks for work he will be employed for ploughing just like an Untouchable. If he is a friend of the employer or more capable, he will be engaged in preference.

Two categories of people work in the fields, land owners and day labourers. Those of the first category may belong to the second at one time or another. Small land holdings do not provide a living for the peasants to whom they belong. Such men must therefore hire out their services to subsist. Once their fields have been cultivated, they have many free days which they occupy working for richer peasants or for less

well-off families whose men are away. We must therefore distinguish two kinds of day-labourer: the day-labourer land owner who works part time as a day-labourer and the full-time day-labourer. The latter is mainly recruited from among the Untouchables who often do not possess much or even any land. Their families are very numerous and live together in the village. Therefore they can share out the tasks, some working in their own fields, others in the fields of the Gurungs. Among the day-labourers, one also finds Brahmins and Thakalis who live in small numbers in several small hamlets, almost destitute of lands. At Mohoriya, several Brahmins come from Tikhī, a small Brahmin colony forty minutes walk to the north-east of the village, to work during the monsoon.

What age groups work in the fields? Except for ploughing which demands much strength, a boy between 15 and 17 years and a girl between 16 and 18 years are considered to be adult workers and receive the same wages as others. From 55/60 years, men and women work less often in the fields. Many men from this age only occupy themselves with the cattle.

b) *Rhythm and organisation of work.*

Agricultural work in Gurung country is very arduous. After a long day working in the lower fields, it takes one and a half hours, often two hours, to climb back to the village up a slope which is often as steep as a 50% gradient. During the harvest the peasants make this journey three, four, five or six times per day, depending on the distance between the fields and the house, loaded with a heavy basket often weighing forty kilos. During ploughing, the heavy wooden swing-plough and the yoke are carried over the shoulder, and manure in back-baskets. Everything, in fact, is carried on a person's back in this country where no method of mechanical or animal transport can be used.

When the monsoon arrives, the rhythm of work becomes very rapid. The millet and rice must be transplanted, while harvesting the maize as quickly as possible and going to and fro between the fields and village to carry the harvest (eight to ten hours a day during the maize harvest). On the other hand, adult labour is insufficient because of the lack of men. All the population between 15 and 60 must work without a break from five in the morning to seven at night to finish the field work in the time intended. During the monsoon, the work is done in the

rain. In the lower lands the heat is heavy and humid. The rain erodes the fields, destroys the harvests, and undermines the walls which hold up the terraces, which must be continually repaired. Monkeys pillage the maize fields which border the woods and a vigilant watch must be mounted to keep them away. Some men spend all day in little huts hitting pans and whistling to frighten away monkeys. If the monsoon does not arrive on time, the sowing of rice and millet has to be done again, which leads to a bad harvest since the period of growth is cut short. During summer, the high lands are infested with leeches which cling by the dozen all over the body, slipping under the clothes and sucking blood.

There is, certainly, the dead season in winter during which the peasant has enforced leisure. It is a period when marriages and funerals are organised, these being occasions for amusement and for visiting family and friends. But the Gurung does not remain inactive. He builds or repairs his house, covering it with a new thatched roof. He goes to find wood on the mountains so that, during the rainy season, he will have dry wood and will be free to work in the fields. He works at basketry, making baskets, mats, and back-baskets. His wife spins and weaves clothes of *naṅi* or blankets from the wool of sheep and goats.

Work in the fields is arduous, but the Gurungs manage to make it pleasant. A Gurung is always happy as long as he is not alone. Therefore he works in a group. There is in Gurung country a system of co-operative labour which is called *nogar* [*nõgar*]. The principle is as follows. Instead of twenty people working alone for twenty days in one field, it is better that twenty people work together for one day in twenty fields successively, which means in effect that the same work is done in a group instead of being done alone. Fifteen, twenty, thirty families in a village join together to form a *nogar*. One member of each family, man or woman, undertakes to work with the others. A leader is named by the majority. It is he who is responsible for all the activities of the *nogar*. He decides in which fields the work is to be done on the following day and gives priority to the family which is under most pressure to see its agricultural work finished. As long as any of the fields of the *nogar* remain uncultivated, the group of workers cannot be employed by any other villager. The *nogar* does not necessarily work every day. The members of a *nogar* are not paid, for they acquit their debts reciprocally, doing an equal amount of work in all the fields of which they form a group. Only the meal at 3 o'clock is offered to them each day by the

house for which they are working. If a member of a *nogar* is prevented from working for a day and cannot be replaced by a member of his family, he must give 1.5 rupees, that is to say the price of a day's work, to the *nogar* fund.

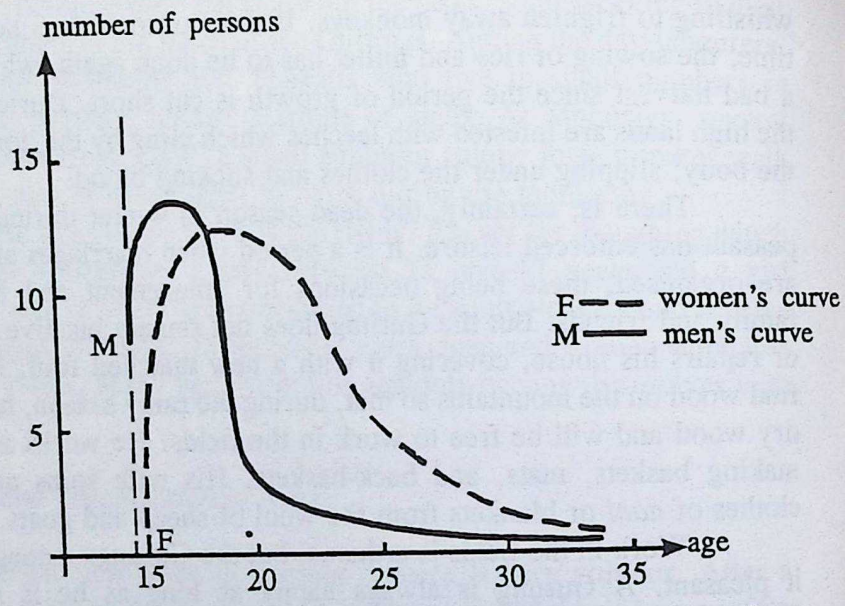

Figure 14 - Graph indicating the variation of the composition of men and women in a *nogar* in relation to age. (These two graphs have been traced by using the average of figures given through the study of four *nogar*)

Sometimes a family pays the *nogar* to work in its fields. It may not belong to the *nogar*, but generally it is a family within the group which has already had the *nogar* in its fields according to the rules of the system, but needs another day's work because it has many fields to cultivate. The members of a *nogar* then become day-labourers and receive a wage for a day's work of 1.5 rupees. But the money is not given to each of the workers. It is put into the fund of the *nogar*. Gifts made by the relatives of the members of the association or by rich peasants coming to the village also enlarge this fund. The money is spent by the *nogar* when it breaks up at the end of the harvest. A picnic is then held. A large amount is eaten and drunk and there is singing and dancing.

The *nogar* is usually formed before the transplanting of the millet and rice, in mid-June, and breaks up after the harvesting of the millet. It does not generally function for the rice harvest as only a minority of families possess rice fields. The *nogar* would then tend to change into a group of day-labourers, which is against the spirit of the *nogar*, a group of friends who join together to work in their own fields.

It is possible to have several *nogar* in a village. At Mohoriya, there was only one in 1958. At Dangsing, to the south, there were four, of which one was composed entirely of Untouchables who have adopted the Gurung system. Such a system is, in fact, unique in Nepal and is specifically Gurung, according to my information. At Kōta, there were seventeen *nogar* joining together nearly 75% of the houses in the village.

The members of the *nogar* whom I knew were between 15 and 50 years of age. The study of the statistics of four of them allows me to draw several conclusions on their composition.

Between 15 and 19 years of age, young men are in the majority in the *nogar*; then their number rapidly diminishes. Most of them enlist as soldiers and leave the village. Women begin to work in the *nogar* a little before they are 17. From 19, they are more numerous than the men. Then, between 22 and 30, they leave the *nogar* little by little when they become the mothers of one, two or three children.

The *nogar* are mainly composed of young people. However there are several which are specially kept for older people. The graph shows markedly that a *nogar* is an association of young or reasonably young individuals, belonging mainly to the same age group being between 15 and 25 years. This indicates well the spirit of a *nogar*: to work among young people with the same energy. A long-standing comradeship unites all the members who want to make the work an enjoyable activity during which each does his task, laughing and joking at the same time, encouraged by the open friendship which exists between them all.

Let us follow a *nogar* during its work day. About half past seven to eight in the morning, a group of young people forms in front of the house for which they are going to work. The head of the *nogar* gives the signal to start out. On the path descending to the fields, a long line of 20, 30, or 60 merry people winds to the middle of the fields. Some of them carry a cauldron or provisions for the meal at 3 p.m. Once at the work place, the head organises the work gangs. He does not do anything except this all day, advising, criticising, and encouraging the young

villagers who work in a line, singing, laughing, and joking, for there is no group of Gurungs who do not joke. When returning to the village, they sing in time with their steps while hitting two hoes, one against the other. Then the members of the *nogar* form a circle on the terrace of the house for whom the work has been done and a pair of young people start to dance to the rhythm of a drum, the clapping of hands and singing of the audience. Then the time for supper comes and everyone disperses.

The *nogar* plays an essential role in the life of the village. From the economic standpoint, it allows important work to be done without monetary payment. In urgent cases, an agricultural operation can be done very quickly by this well organised and well trained gang of workers. The *nogar* develops a spirit of comradeship, of solidarity, in the village, for this free association in work powerfully unites its members and accustoms them to the life of the group. A household does not live alone, does not work alone, but with other households in the village [42].

c). *Wages.*

Wages are the same for all workers, adolescents and adults, men and women, Gurungs and Untouchables. In the Modi Valley, wages are 1.5 rupees per day for a day-labourer plus a meal, and often the evening meal. The payment may be in cash, or in grain at the rate of 1.5 rupees worth of grain per day. The peasant day-labourers who work in the rice fields are paid in rice, for generally they don't grow it themselves.

G.- PRODUCTIVITY.

There are no official statistics of agricultural production in the Gurung area. I have noted the quantities of cereals harvested by each house in Mohoriya and added them together. The unit used is the *muri* which is a measurement of volume.

1 *muri* = 20 *pathi* = (20 x 8) *mana*.

A *mana* is approximately equal to one pint, that is to 57 cl. (cf. p. 98).

The *muri* is therefore 9.12 decalitres.

MEASURES	RICE	MAIZE	MILLET	BARLEY & BUCKWHEAT	GRAINS & VEGETABLES
In *Muri*	910	448.9	672	221.7	93.11
In hl. (about)	830	410	610	200	85

The rice harvest is the most important. Sixty houses cultivate rice, but many of these only produce a little, only being able to rent a small field belonging to a rich owner. The rice fields are in the hands of 25 families who represent a quarter of the population. In contrast, maize and millet are the two essential crops for they are produced by all the households. The figures shown above are those for 1957 and correspond to a good year. In a bad year, it seems that the fall in the figures show a reduction of 10%, which is a relatively slight decline in production, with reference to the average. It is impossible to discuss the yield here, in the complete absence of a precise measure of the lands.

The production of potatoes is increasing. It is a recent importation and flourishes in the slightly sandy and cold high lands. The introduction of the potato has made certain Gurung villages prosper. Thus Kota, to the north of Mohoriya, has for several years produced a high quality potato in great quantity. The villagers sell them to the Brahmins, Chetris, and Newars, of the southern valleys who come to the village to buy them and pay a very good price for them (1 rupee a *pathi*). This new trade has certainly contributed to the expansion of Kota during the last twenty years. This is similar to the rapid development of Sherpa

society, at the foot of Mount Everest, during the first half of this century, thanks to the introduction of the potato from Darjeeling [2] [43].

H. - LIVESTOCK REARING.

Livestock rearing has undergone a profound change during the last hundred years. Previously, it constituted the principal source of wealth, agriculture only supplying odd amounts of income. Old legends describe the life in the high lands amidst the great woods where huge herds of cows, sheep, goats and yak grazed. This last animal is no longer reared by the Gurungs who now live on land which is too low for the yak. This remark furnishes an argument in favour of our thesis, that the Gurungs have come from the nortnern slopes of the Himalayas where the high altitude permits the raising of yaks. During the last century the Gurung population has increased rapidly. They have had to sacrifice the great woods in order to turn them into cultivated fields. The disappearance of the ground to wander through has swept away that of the herds. Ninety years ago all the northern part of Mohoriya, called *cak-dhū* (the name of a species of tree) was covered with forests. Two peasants together owned 500 sheep and goats. Four others shared a herd of 300 cows. In 1958 the population of Mohoriya had increased tenfold. On the other hand, the village only possessed 213 cows and 200 sheep and goats.

I. - Livestock rearing in the Village.

Each house has a hen-coop in a cavity under the verandah. Every evening, a plank is slid in front of the opening to shut in the fowls during the night. There is considerable consumption of chickens by the inhabitants, either at the time of family religious ceremonies, or on feast days. Cocks, hens, and above all the pullets have two great enemies: the fox, which slips through the village in the shadow of the high plants which grow in the orchards, and birds of prey, buzzards or falcons, which, after gliding for hours above the village, suddenly swoop to seize

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[2] Lecture by Professor C. von FURER-HAIMENDORF, Musée Guimet, April 1959.

a pullet and carry it far away, despite the clucking of the mother hen which tries to put her young under cover. The guard dogs of the village will not directly attack a fox, but give warning. Thanks to the barking of the dogs, one can find out the track taken by the fox in the orchards. Men armed with guns make a drive and very often the fox does not leave alive. Its fur belongs to the person who killed it. Such a capture always causes a great gathering of villagers at the place where the fox was killed.

Gurungs never rear pigs, which they consider an impure animal. They do not eat its flesh. Contact with this animal pollutes like that with an Untouchable. Only the latter occasionally rear pigs, but keep them outside the village, near to their houses [44].

In front of most of the houses, buffaloes are attached in the evening to stakes stuck on the terrace. All day they wander freely in the north part of the village, mainly at *kyu-wa-dhū*, an unfertile stretch of thicket, and in the part of the fields left fallow. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, they come back near to their stakes, waiting for someone to tie them up and bring them grass, maize stalks, etc. They provide dung for the orchards and a little milk (1 litre per day) for daily consumption. From time to time one is killed for the village to eat [45].

A quarter of the Mohoriya families have several goats forming a herd of 138 head. They live in small raised huts beneath which one can easily gather the dung (the floor is made of bamboo poles spaced slightly apart). Each morning one or two villagers accompanied by one or two children gather all the herd and take them to the fields full of bushes to the north and north-west of the village. Once a week, the goats, like the buffaloes, eat a salted mash to balance their diet. These goats give manure and provide fresh meat for the village. When a he-goat or ram is killed, its spiral horns are kept and attached to the pillars holding up the gallery. It is an element of decoration which, according to certain informants, brings luck. Ten years ago, the flock of sheep belonging to Mohoriya was exterminated by a disease.

2. - Animal rearing in the village fields.

Cows do not live in the village. Thirty per cent of the households have temporary movable stables erected in the middle of the fields, where the herds pass the night. The stable is made of a light wooden

frame on which are placed bamboo mats. A central eating trough, placed length-wise, allows the animals to be stalled face to face in two lines. One of the two ends is kept for the calves and the herdsman's fire, his food, his belongings and the milk pots. The stable is always made on a well sheltered terrace, against the wall holding up the terrace above. When the herd changes its pasture, the herdsman takes down the stable, rolls up the mats, piles up his belongings, his food, and the wooden milk pots in a large, closed, basket in the shape of a back-basket and puts it on his shoulders. If he has no help, he must make two journeys to carry all this material to the new location for the stable, which is very quickly reconstructed. There are twenty herdsmen at Mohoriya. (Certain families do not have a stable but a relation looks after their animals). Three are Brahmins, one is a Magar, the others are the heads of Gurung households. One is a 14 year old boy whose father is a soldier.

After the morning milking, the animals go to graze. Two or three herdsmen look after their herds together to allow each to go and look for grass which the animals eat in the evening and during the night, after the second milking. The milk is boiled and kept in wooden pots. When they are full, the herdsman churns the *dhai* (or *dahi*) and makes *ghī* from it. The herdsman eats and sleeps next to the animals. From time to time, he comes to the village to bring the *ghu* and look for provisions to eat. He leads a very solitary life, in continual contact with the animals. The cows give a maximum of one *mana* of milk at each milking (which is 114 cl. a day).

The herds move across the village lands following the crops. From November to February the animals are in the low lands I, II, III, IV and V. Then they climb towards the fallow high lands during the summer. Cows are raised for three well defined reasons. They manure the fields on which they pasture [3] They provide the milk that is made into *ghī* for the village. They produce oxen for work in the fields.

The method of castration is as follows: the bull is laid on its side, the hoofs are fettered and kept immobile with ropes; the testicles are passed between the back hoofs and the scrotum is stretched out. Then some kind of wooden pincers are used to nip the skin found between the

[3] A peasant can ask the owner of a herd to pasture the animals on his field for the manure. He pays about 2 rupees a week for a herd of fifteen cows.

body of the bull and its testicles and a stone is put beneath them. With a mallet one hits the upper arm of the pincers (*riśt*) made from *jhare* wood. The tubes which connect the testicles to the penis of the bull are crushed and rendered useless. It is necessary to be very careful during this operation not to hit the embryo udders, which are found underneath the testicles, as a careless blow could mean the death of the animal. After the operation, it is traditional to say to the ox: "Ah well! Now, go like this and mount your mother and sister!".

The herds suffer from various illnesses of which some are dealt with quite well by the herdsmen.[4] During the rainy season, leeches attach themselves in bunches on the back of the unfortunate animals, which is dangerous if the leech is in the area of the eyes, nostrils, or ears, as the animals cannot get rid of them without the help of the herdsman. Sometimes a cow is killed "by a tiger" (or more exactly by a leopard) when the game in the high lands is destroyed by an epidemic.

Nepalese law punishes a person who kills a cow. Gurungs have no particular respect for a cow. No worship is made to them. The peasants are used to not eating their flesh for the tradition says that one must not do it and they are convinced by this. When a cow dies, it is left where it collapsed. The vultures take over and quickly clean the carcass. If the animal dies in a stable, the cobbler (*sarki*) buys the hide (1 rupee) and takes the bits of dead flesh to eat [5]. If the herdsman is employed, he is fed and clothed by his employer and receives 20 to 25 rupees a year.

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[4] Certain abcesses are treated by applying a herb called *mahrbel* mixed with naphthalene and some paraffin to the inflamed part.

[5] Gurungs consider that *sarki* have a particularly strong constitution because they eat a lot of dead meat.

Census of animals.

Buffaloes	99	
Cows	213	
Oxen	64	(all are plough animals)
Goats	138	(plus 70 belonging to one owner which are looked after by a shepherd from another village).
Horses	3	

- *Horse*: Only rich families have a horse. They are good riding animals, small but very strong and lively, with thick hair on the mane and a very long tail. These excellent mountain horses know how to climb steep slopes with care. They are not shod. Most of the time they live in complete freedom in the high pastures and are only rarely saddled when their owner has to go to a distant village. There are many villages where there are no horses. At Ghalegaõ, the village of the ancient *ghale* king, situated in the centre of Gurung country, I noticed 18 or 20 horses being raised, a unique feature in all the region through which I travelled. The price of a horse varies between 900 and 1,500 rupees.

3. - Rearing in the highlands (alpine pastures).

This kind of rearing no longer takes place at Mohoriya. On the one hand the herd of sheep had been decimated by disease, on the other hand, as we have indicated, there are no longer pastures large enough in the region of the village to allow the flocks to feed during the winter. But all the big villages at the end of the valley, at the foot of the large peaks of the Annapurna range, still have large flocks. I studied the movements of these in several villages and above all at Kõta, the last village at the top of the Modi Valley. We have here a system of rearing sheep and goats which move from the high lands to the low lands over long distances, following an annual cycle. There are nearly 10,000 sheep and goats at Kõta (7,000 sheep and 3,000 goats). They belong to about a fifth of the Gurung population (which is about 90 houses). These flocks leave the village in groups of 500 to 600 head. Each group is led by three or four shepherds. They divide themselves into three different districts in

the highlands. In mid-May, when several families have joined their animals together to form a group, the flock leaves the village region where the fields are beginning to be cultivated and, moving towards the north, climb the first slopes of the high range. About the 1st August, they reach the summer pastures (*bugani*, nep. [*bugyani*, gur.]) at between 3,500 and 4,000 m. At this height, there are no longer trees, but a thick grass grows on the top of the ridges and in the hollows which have been free from snow for several months. Cabins are made by the shepherds to shelter from the frequent summer rains and cold nights. The very young kids and lambs are kept there. Each day, the animals go to browse in a different direction. The goats and ewes are milked. The new-born are often penned in an enclosure called a *citra*.

The alpine pastures of Kõta are situated at three different points, determining three different routes. When the 1st September comes, the descent to the low lands begins. As with the ascent, it is made slowly; the flocks stop where there are good pastures for a week or two. By a direct route, the *bugani* pastures are three or four days from Kõta. The hated enemy of flocks and shepherds at this time is the leech which sucks the blood of both man and animal. The white fleeces of the sheep are marked with great red stains where leeches have attached themselves long enough to suck well. The blood begins to flow when they detach themselves. About the 1st November the flocks have returned to the height of the village of Kõta (2,200-2,500 m). They are then taken in groups onto the millet stubble which has been harvested. Then between the 15th and 20th November, they descend towards the bottom of the valley to browse on the rice stubble at about 1,600-1,700 m. Thus the flocks stay in the mild region of the valley during the winter, then, about the 15th February, they cross the little bridge over the upper Modi above a narrow gorge. They go up again rapidly the other side of the valley to the east of Kõta, then, following the line of the ridge, they descend towards the south as far as Sobrõ, passing imperceptibly from 2,500 to 2,200 m. in height. There, it is two days walk from Kõta. Resting here and there, the flocks slowly return to the village which they reach about the 15th April. They are then kept in the maize and millet fields to manure them before the spring ploughing. They remain there until the 15th May, the date of the new departure for the highlands.

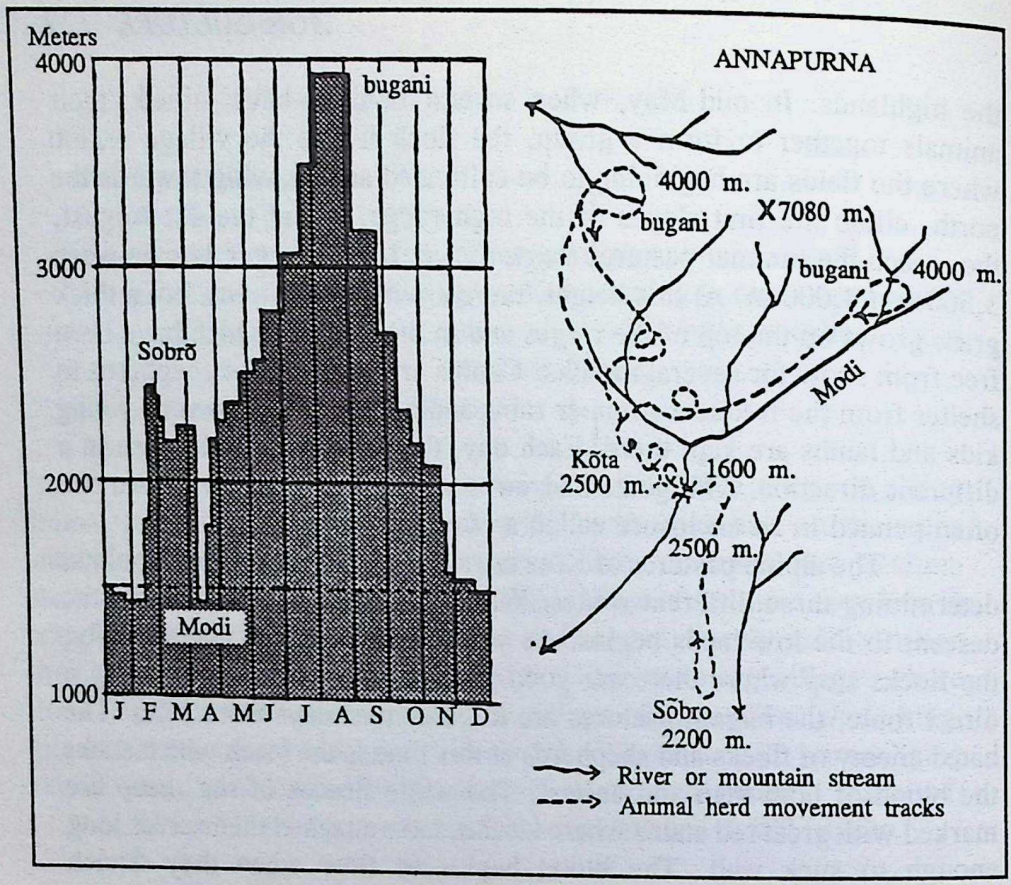

Figure 15 - Movements of flocks at Kõta.

During their wanderings, the shepherds carry their provisions with them; nevertheless, they consume many of the milk products furnished by the flock. The milk is used to make *ghī* and a sort of boiled cheese (*chyudbi*) on alternate days. That which is not eaten is carried from time to time to the village by one or two of the shepherds who then return with new provisions. The shepherds mainly eat *khil*, rice boiled with milk.

A flock of 500 head living in the high mountains gives at the most 24 *mana* of milk a day, which is nearly 13.5 litres. Part is made into cheese which keeps for ten or eleven days. Between June and July that milk production is at its best. The hair of the goats is shorn at the beginning of November when the flock returns from *bugani* and is near to the village. Sheep are shorn twice a year: in March, after winter, and at the end of September. This wool is used to make coverings and warm winter capes. A certain number of blankets woven at Kota are sold to

merchants from the southern valleys of Nepal. At the times of Dasarah, nearly 1,000 head are bought by men coming from the south to be sacrificed during the festival. A large ram costs 50 to 60 rupees, a ewe with its lamb, 90 rupees. A ewe or a he-goat aged two years costs between 40 and 50 rupees. The village also kills goats and sheep for its own consumption, mainly male animals. Therefore, a certain number of animals are kept in the village throughout the year.

A good shepherd who does not own a flock receives a wage of 60 to 65 rupees a year, on top of his food and clothes. Among the four shepherds of a flock, one often finds two wage-earning men and two members of the family which owns the flock.

In conclusion, the flocks of Kõta move following a system of periodic migration from the high lands to the low lands, and vice-versa. These flocks only remain a short time in the same place, except during the two or three months of winter. They never live in the village in a sheep-fold and usually sleep out in the open. Twice a year, they move towards the high lands, firstly towards the Annapurna range, then, after a stay at the bottom of the valley, towards the middle ranges of the spurs of the Himalayas. The animals are used for four purposes: to give wool, milk, meat and manure.

The flocks are composed of sheep belonging to several peasants, which implies a previous arrangement to pay the costs of the shepherds, the distribution of the milk products, and the organisation of the time during which the flocks manure the lands of the villagers. The smooth working of the system shows once again how much the Gurung, despite his independent character, is used to organising himself into co-operative groups where the individual depends heavily on the community.

The lands through which they move belong to the whole village. Each villager can send out their flock without paying a rent. But while it is true that the high lands to the north of Kõta belong to this village, those on the other side of the Modi are owned by other villages. However the flocks from Kõta have free access. This confirms the general situation which I have often noted among the Gurungs; the summits of the wooded ranges belong administratively to the villages, but in practice they can be used for pasture by those who wish to do so, provided that the beneficiary, in so doing, does not infringe village rights.[46]

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMY

For the last 60 years, the Gurung village has formed an almost closed economic unit [47]. The village budget was well balanced and even, in certain cases, clearly in surplus. Now, the money saved by the soldiers who serve abroad allows the villagers to live above their local means; building good houses and importing cloth from India to dress women and children, as well as other manufactured products. The Gurung villages are visibly richer than those in the southern lands inhabited by Chetris, Newars, and Brahmins. The local economy is principally founded on agriculture and stock raising and on two flourishing local industries, those of weaving and basket-making. Artisan work is assured in each village by the Untouchable groups who make iron objects, precious ornaments and sew clothes.

The Gurung has a developed sense of private property. Without being a good trader, he knows very well how to manage the family money, rapidly reclaiming that which is due to him and making others wait for repayment of his borrowings and debts. He is aware of the legal rules concerning all loan contracts, and knows the limits of property rights.

We will look firstly at the budget of one family, its expenses and receipts. The only existing documentation is that which I was able to gather during my stay among the Gurungs. It does not enable one to study all the variations of this budget since it only covers one year. I was able to check and modify information given by my informants by personal observation.

Then, I will give a short summary of landed property, of the ways it is acquired and its distribution. The lands not being measured and

no land-survey drawn up, it was not possible for me to analyse the movements of property and the variations in the distribution of the fields in the village.

A. - FAMILY BUDGET.

It is difficult to be precise about family budgets for no information covering several years has yet been collected. While it is easy enough to obtain the food budget for a family during an average year (the cereal harvests do not vary much in quantity), it is almost impossible to find out the details of the general budget. Income can easily be estimated but it is not the same for expenditure. For ceremonial expenses, only information covering several years would be able to bring some clarification. For example, when a family celebrates a *pae* (the conclusion of a funeral), 300 to 1,500 rupees are spent. But this event is only occasional. Similarly, certain deaths are not followed by a *pae*. On the other hand, informants are often reticent when one raises the problem of loans and usury. These transactions occur frequently in Gurung country, but it is difficult to estimate the sums borrowed and the additional expenses caused by the payment of interest [48].

I. - Food budget shown by the consumption of cereals.

It is the custom, when one feeds a day-labourer, to give him a *mana* of rice per meal. If this is replaced with other grains, the volume is a little greater. If an adult does not eat anything but rice, he consumes at the maximum (a *mana* of rice is considered a very good ration) annually (1 x 2 x 365) *mana*, say 730 *mana* or 4 *muri*, 11 *pathi*, 2 *mana*. My observations suggest that in reality few men eat such a quantity of rice for a meal except when the work is hard. Women never consume a *mana* of rice per meal.

This accords quite well with the information given by informants on the consumption of rice per family, per year.

We will consider two cases: that of a family eating rice (a wealthy family) and that of a family not eating rice (a fairly poor family).

In the first case, the family is composed of three adults, a man and two women.

- The consumption is:
5 *muri* 10 *pathi* of rice
6 *muri* 10 *pathi* of other cereals (maize, millet, barley, buckwheat)

which is equivalent to a little less than a *mana* of rice and a little less than a *mana* of other grains per adult, per day.

In reality, it is as well to make a distinction between men and women and to take as a base for calculation 2 *muri* 6 *pathi* of rice per man and 2 *muri* 2 *pathi* of rice per woman and the same for the other cereals, say 4 *muri* 12 *pathi* of grain per man and 4 *muri* 4 *pathi* per woman, per year.

- The consumption of:
5 *muri* 6 *pathi* of cereals other than rice per adult male, per year, which corresponds to:
2.6 *mana* per day.

and:

4 *muri* 12 *pathi* per adult female, per year.

In these two cases, the members of the family are well nourished and in good physical condition whilst doing hard work in the fields. Many of the poor people eat less at home than the quantities of grain indicated above, but they get them when they work as day-labourers for the more wealthy village houses. Now using the figures given above we may evaluate the number of houses in Mohoriya which have a budget in cereals in balance, in deficit, or in surplus.

- Balanced budget: 23 houses (three are Untouchables)
- Deficit budget: 47 houses (twelve are Untouchables); 20 are very deficient (nine of them Untouchables)
- Surplus budget: (25 houses) of which eight are very much in surplus.

Furthermore, there are four households for which my information is incomplete. Thus, 50% of the houses have a grain deficit, 23% are in balance, 27% have a surplus. Twelve of the fifteen Untouchable houses

are in deficit, three in balance. The deficit is mainly due to the small scale of much of the cultivation which cannot feed all the family. If all the villagers lived in the village, there would be many more deficit households.

2. - General Budget.

a) *Expenditure.*

- We have already seen the expenditure in cereals. To cover the deficit, 50% of the households must buy cereals in the village.

- All villagers produce a little of all that they consume. Only those who do not produce enough must buy food such as potatoes, *ghī*, alcohol, and meat.

- The expenditure connected with a dwelling, the repair or construction of a new house (fires are frequent) are not very great.

- Men clothe themselves mainly with textile products made in the house, women with imported fabrics, bought from outside the village.

- Ritual ceremonies entail considerable expenditure, above all the *pae*. During these ceremonies, the family spends much more than it receives. The priests are usually paid in grain.

- The families cultivating largish areas have to employ day-labourers who are paid in money or grain. These cultivators all have a grain budget which is in balance or in surplus.

- The Gurungs spend large amounts of money to adorn their women in rings, gold ornaments, coral necklaces, etc. Furthermore, they smoke constantly cigarettes imported from India which they have to pay money for.

In winter, the soldiers who are on leave and the pensioners go to draw their pensions at Pokhara which is two days walk away, or at the recruitment camp which means taking a plane, and this often entails great expense.

- The Gurungs often borrow. A number of families have to pay appreciable sums each year in money and in grain to meet the interest due.

There are so many irregular expenses, for families living in very different conditions, that it is not worth trying to assess the value of the total expenditure in a particular case. There are enormous variations

between one case and another. This just gives an idea of the factors which affect a family budget.

b) *Principal income.*

Agricultural production is the basic source of revenue. At Mohoriya, almost all that is produced is consumed by the village. Only the seven or eight families who have a production of grain which is considerably in excess of their needs sell their surplus to the inhabitants of the southern valleys. Ten to twelve oxen are sold per year outside the village. Eight to ten buffaloes, and 65 to 70 goats are eaten a year in the village, many families joining together to buy an animal, to kill it and share the meat.

- The majority of the families who have a budget deficit in agricultural produce hire out their labour, either regularly or from time to time, to rich proprietors. The day-labourers are paid in money, grain or in food.
- Liquid cash is mainly earned by the men from the village who serve for a part of their lives in the British or Indian armies.

Savings made from pay and brought back to the village represent a considerable sum of liquid cash and allows the Gurung villagers to live well above the level permitted by the local resources. It allows them to construct large stone houses, spacious and comfortable. The women wear clothes made of Indian material and adorn themselves with heavy gold ornaments and expensive coral necklaces. Ceremonies such as the funerals (*pae*) are grandiose, causing an impressive gathering of villagers who spend (in two or three days) a considerable sum.

In general, mercenaries are well paid. I will only give some approximate figures to evaluate wages received. Since each soldier is a particular case, there are various factors to take into account when reckoning their pay. To make it possible to appreciate these figures, let us remember that a day's work in Gurung country is paid for on average 1.5 Nepalese rupees, plus a meal, which is less that one Indian rupee, plus a meal. Remember that 1.6 Rp. N.C. ("Nepali currency") equals 1 Rp. I.C. ("Indian currency").

Clothing, lodging and food for a soldier is provided by the army which employs him. The basic salary of a young Sepoy is 35 Rp.I.C. a month. In the British army an "overseas" allocation is given to him. It amounts to 55 Rp.I.C. which brings the monthly wage to 90 Rp.I.C.

A Subedar (one attains this rank after at least 15 or 20 years service) gets about 200 Rp.I.C. per month. The "overseas" allocation of 120 Rp.I.C. brings the British wages to 320 Rp.I.C. In the British army, the family allowance varies from 80 to 110 Rp.I.C. per month. The Indian and British armies allow a soldier to send for his wife for a period of three years. Then she can return to the village for three years and, if she wants to, can again accompany her husband for three years. If she is the wife of an officer, she can live continually near the latter wherever he is stationed. A high-ranking officer in the Indian Army who had served for a long time in the Gurkhas said to me that a Sepoy brings on average 700 to 900 Rp.I.C. in savings to his family after three years of service. This sum can vary considerably within very large limits. On the one hand, it depends on the inclination of the soldier to save. He can, for example, drink beer in the camp canteen. The total sum which is deducted from his pay depends on his sobriety. On the other hand, before going on leave, the soldier buys all sorts of Indian material to clothe the members of his family living in the village. He also spends a lot of money on cheap goods, tea, cigarettes, etc. Thus, the savings which he brings back are not only in money. A large part is used in buying the manufactured products, which are the joy of his family.

If a soldier, whatever his rank, has done a minimum of fifteen years service (except in certain cases of discharge, etc.) he has the right to a pension which is the same in the British or Indian Army. After fifteen years of service, the pension is 15 Rp.I.C. per month. For a Sepoy, even if he serves for more than fifteen years, it always remains at 15 Rp. I.C.

After twenty-five years service, a Havildar receives 25 Rp.I.C. and a Subedar 35 Rp.I.C. per month.

To this basic pension can be added gratuities of many kinds. Certain decorations considerably increase a pension. An ordinary Captain who has received several very honourable decorations can count on a monthly pension of at least 200 Rp.I.C. No tax is imposed on the money given to soldiers. The wages paid in the foreign armies are therefore well above those which a highland peasant can get in his village.

The money saved in wages does not greatly benefit the Newar and Thakali merchants in the local bazaars. In fact, almost all the manufactured products used in the villages are brought from India by the soldiers on leave, the British Army mercenaries included, for after having returned by plane from Singapore to Calcutta, they are taken to their recruitment centre in India where they are discharged. The choice and quality of the products there is much better than those which one finds in Nepal, and their price much lower. The soldier must, nevertheless, pay for his transport from the Nepal-India frontier to his village himself. For the West-Central region of Nepal, he must go from Nautãwa, a frontier town, to Bhairawa in the Nepalese Terai from where he takes a plane for Pokhara. There, he hires one, two or three porters who accompany him to his village, situated at a distance of between two and five days walk.

Within the territorial unit of the village, the money earned by the soldier has a tendency to go little by little to increase the wealth of the rich families. We have seen that a large number of families are in deficit at the local level. The difference which is brought to them by the savings of father or sons who are soldiers allows these families to balance their budgets and to buy the food provisions which they lack. But it is the families who have a large amount of land and in consequence an agricultural surplus who sell this produce. The soldiers' money enables all the families to live decently, but goes at the end of the reckoning to fill the coffers of the rich villagers. Thus, the difference between the rich and poor villagers tends to increase.

Nevertheless, mercenary soldiering enables certain families whose cultivation is marginal (cultivation in which the budgetary balance is precarious) to definitively improve their economic status when the soldier becomes a Non-Commissioned Officer or an Officer. At Mohoriya, for example, the head of one house is aged 35 and serves in the Indian army with the rank of Havildar. He has built himself a fine house. The other members of his local lineage group, who have resigned after two, three or four years of service, are much less wealthy and have to work as day-labourers. This observation leads us to a general conclusion. Only the Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers serving fifteen years or more in a foreign army have a chance of considerably improving their family's economic status. From the economic point of

view, promotion is a factor in mercenary soldiering. We will see later on what effect it has from other points of view.[49]

c) *Other income.*

- *Borrowing; Usury*: the money-lenders live in the village or the valley. They are always Gurungs. Certain rich Gurungs lend outside the valley or at least to people in the valley who are not Gurung agriculturalists but Newar, Thakali, and Chetri merchants, established in the lowlands on the major trade routes. Thus, much of the capital of Mohoriya is invested at Birethãti, a stopping place established on the route linking Pokhara to Tibet by the valley of the Kali Gandaki. These loan contracts are set out in writing in a form common throughout Nepal. They can, on their own, be presented to a tribunal as documents of proof, if need be. Others are not officially valid. Two or three men in the village know the formulas by heart and are capable of setting out such contracts correctly. The loans are usually pledged on lands. Other goods, jewels for example, may also be pledged. The rate of interest varies from 10 to 15%. Numerous long and costly disputes break out as the borrowers are never ready to repay and ask for postponements. The Gurung taste for chicanery encourages this.

The majority of the small loans are contracted when poor families have exhausted their grain reserves and are waiting for the first harvest of maize and millet. In this case there is a special system of borrowing called *batte*. A family who has still got grain lends to another who lacks it. The rate of interest is a *pathi* of grain for four *pathi* borrowed during a period of three or four months following. The duration of the loan corresponds to the length of the period of cereal shortage [50].

- *The money game or loan association*: this game is common to the Gurungs and Thakalis whose country extends to the south of Mustang, between the Daulagiri and Annapurna ranges, to the north-west of the Modi Valley. It seems to be unknown in the lowlands, at Pokhara or Kathmandu. The Gurungs call it *dhakuri*. Both men and women can take part, but *dhakuri* is most popular among women. It can also be organised among young women, with their mothers advising. An elected person is charged with the organisation of this game which can take place at any time of the year. Let us see an example of the way in which it

works. A certain number of villagers, let us say ten, join together and decide to play *dhakuri*. Each member puts in ten rupees for a first period of a month, which represents a sum of 100 rupees which is given immediately to the player who has need of it. At the beginning of the second month, each member gives 10 plus 1 rupee and the total of 110 rupees is given to a second member who wants this money at once. In the third month, the individual contribution is 10 plus 2 rupees and a third member receives on asking 120 rupees. The game continues until the tenth month, at the beginning of which 10 plus 9 rupees is given by each player. The last member, who has waited 10 months before being repaid, gets 190 rupees. All the players have contributed 145 rupees. To gain the largest sum, one must wait a long time before being reimbursed. If no player wishes to receive the sum at the start of a month, the one to receive it is drawn by lot. Thus, chance plays a part, but it is tempered by the immediate needs of the players for cash. The sums contributed each month are usually more than 10 rupees, especially when rich people take part. The period can also extend for more than 10 months, if there are more than 10 members or payments are made every two months. From the financial standpoint, the operation brings about a sort of compound interest loan, with recurring payments, in the short or medium term, repayable periodically. But the returns may also be made periodically by drawing lots if the lenders do not wish to benefit from the monthly contributions. The lender thus becomes a borrower.[51]

Here we see again the Gurung taste for being part of a group and of amusing themselves. In the same way as for agricultural operations for example, they join together in the financial operation of borrowing and lending which could as easily be done individually. They prefer to do it in a group adding the attraction of a game, with the diversion of the occasional drawing of lots. The existence of the *dhakuri* among the Gurungs poses a problem. Is it a product of Gurung culture? Brahmins, Chetris and Newars of Kathmandu who acted as informants assure me that *dhakuri* is not practised in the lowlands of Nepal. On the other hand, M. Freedman describes a Chinese system of association for lending money resembling that of the *dhakuri* [1]. This leads us to think that Gurung soldiers in the British army may have borrowed *dhakuri* from the

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[1] M. FREEDMAN, "The handling of money...", *Man*, 1959, no. 89.

Chinese of Hong-Kong or Singapore. Nevertheless the money lending association of the Chinese and *dhakuri* of the Gurungs are not identical. The Chinese system is mainly "a means of procuring relatively cheap credit on a cooperative basis. The promoter paid no interest on what he borrowed, while the members paid interest at rates below those demanded by money lenders and pawn brokers". In contrast, *dhakuri* is a money game. One says *dhakuri klõ-ba* (to play at *dhakuri*) in the same way as *pho klõ-ba* (to play at the chase, to hunt). Besides, it is mainly women and young girls who "play" at *dhakuri* and generally they belong to relatively wealthy families [52].

B. - LOCAL NON-AGRICULTURAL OCCUPATIONS.

I. - Occupations of Untouchables.

We have seen that the Untouchables have little land and often work as day-labourers in Gurung fields. But what distinguishes them from Gurungs economically, is that they exclusively practice certain artisan trades which are never undertaken by Gurungs. They are, according to their category, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, tailors, and cobblers.

- *The blacksmiths and goldsmiths*: There are in Mohoriya, six blacksmith houses and five goldsmith. They work in iron, copper, and precious metals. If the wife and children are employed as full time day-labourers, the head of the family, himself, cannot work in the fields except when he is not kept in the house by his trade. Competition being accepted, a Gurung is free to take his work to one of the artisans known for his ability or his low prices. Skill brings higher prices. A blacksmith receives from one to six *pathi* of grain per year from a Gurung client family. The payment can also be made by the piece. The sheath of metal which covers the point of the wooden plough-share of a swing plough (*phāli* nep.) costs 3.50 rupees, the price of metal included. The objects made are often clumsy and badly finished. The blacksmiths make nails, blades of sickles and knives, hoes, plough blades, and tripods for putting cooking pots on the fire, rings for putting padlocks on doors, and chains.

They also repair all objects and in particular the large Tibetan locks which close the houses.

The Mohoriya blacksmiths are the poorest of the Untouchables. They hardly have any land. Their families have only been there for two or three generations. They have taken the place of other blacksmiths who left the village when the copper mines in the mountains, an hour to the north of Mohoriya, (the drifts from which might have been expanded), had to be closed. The cost of exploitation was too high to compete with the copper sold by the merchants of the south. Many of these blacksmiths, who were also coppersmiths, worked as miners and treated the mineral afterwards. I was not able to gather more information on this subject because the last old miner of the valley died three months before my arrival in the area.

For equal work, it seems that the blacksmith gets less than the goldsmith. The latter makes all the jewels and precious ornaments of the Gurung women and children. He works mainly in gold and silver and is paid according to the weight by *tola* [2] of the ornament made.

- A *tola* of gold is worth about 15 Rp. N.C. (10 Rp. I.C.).

- A *bijbanda*, a female ornament, of 10 *tola* of gold can be made in seven days. The workman is paid 2 rupees per *tola*. A wage of 1 rupee is earned for about three hours work.

- For an *arśe*, the wage is 4 rupees per *tola*, for a *hamel*, 1 rupee per *tola*.

- For a pair of *dhusi* [*dhungri*]: 4 rupees (weight: 1 *tola*). A *fuli* of a quarter of a *tola* costs, gold included, 6 rupees.

The goldsmith is also the handyman of the village. He repairs the umbrellas, makes screws, repairs the chests, etc. He is the least poor of the Untouchables. He generally possesses several fields and is often employed as a share-cropper.

- *The tailor*. To be accurate, the man is rarely a tailor. It is the wife who is the dressmaker, cutting and repairing men and women's

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[2] For gold 100 *lal* = 10 *masa* = 1 *tola* For silver 80 *lal* = 10 *masa*; 12 *masa* = 1 *tola*; according to LANDON, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 330. According to a local informant, the *tola* had the weight of silver in the old one rupee silver coin.

clothing. There were three households of tailors in Mohoriya. Each Gurung family pays from two to 11 *pathi* of grain per year depending on the importance and the wealth of the house. The dressmaker works either at her house or on the verandah of the household who employs her. (Several old Gurung women who have a little leisure make their own clothes).

The husband is usually a day-labourer, carpenter or assistant carpenter, although the majority of carpenters are Gurungs. He receives from 2 to 3 rupees per day plus food, according to his skill as a carpenter [53].

- *The katwal*, "factotum" of the village headman, is often chosen from among the tailors. We will later describe his activities. He receives a *pathi* of grain a year from each household.

- *The cobbler*. There is no cobbler at Mohoriya. They use the one from Dangsing. He does all the leather work, mainly making and repairing shoes. He is paid by the piece. A pair of shoes in wild goat skin costs from 13 to 18 rupees depending on the type wanted. The price is halved if the leather is provided. Four days is sufficient to make a pair of shoes. If they are made of cow hide, the price varies from 5 to 9 rupees. The skin of a cow costs 1 rupee, that of a buffalo 5 rupees, that of a wild goat from 2.5 to 3 rupees. During the last ten years, the work of the cobbler has increased considerably, for the villagers are wearing shoes more and more.

2. - Gurung occupations.

The Untouchables sometimes take part in these occupations, but much less frequently than Gurungs. Sometimes, even, they don't know how to do them.

- *Hunting and fishing*. Hunting of larger game and of birds is very frequently practised by the Gurungs, mainly in the dead season, at the beginning of spring and before the rigours of winter. Among the old soldiers one finds a large number of good shots who are the experienced hunters. They set out in a group to go to the high lands, spending several

days there and bringing back to the village a supply of fresh and tasty meat and skins of wild goat, deer, etc.

When work in the fields brings the villagers into the rice lands beside the Modi, several men concentrate on fishing using snares and landing nets.

- *Gathering*. When they go to work in the high lands and cut wood in the forests, the inhabitants, men and women, large and small, collect wild plants and roots of all kinds in passing. They have a wide knowledge of all that grows in what they often call the "jungle", the wild lands. In the woods, they find fruit (mulberries), vegetables (small shoots of mountain bamboo, the inside of which is very tasty, the stems of tall plants full of a rich and refreshing juice, and roots and herbs with a therapeutic use). Wild vegetables play an important part in the diet of the villagers. They provide green food when the orchards do not produce much.

- *Two local industries*.

- *Weaving*. In 60 of the 94 houses in the census, women of Mohoriya spin and weave, above all during the dead season. They weave men's clothes in cotton and *nañi*, blankets and hoods made of sheep and goats' wool for family use. Several old women also work to sell to the families who do not weave. Woollen blankets and sacks are often sold to people from the south. In the villages where the flocks of sheep and goats are numerous, the weaving industry brings in an appreciable amount of extra money since many blankets are exported. In the region of Lamjung, the villagers sell rice sacks made of *nañi* to the inhabitants of the southern lowlands (3 rupees per sack).

- *Basketwork*. Almost all the men in the village do basketwork using the supple stems of mountain bamboo. A number of back-baskets and panniers are used locally for carrying things. Villages which are not, as Mohoriya is, deprived of the majority of their young men, make many baskets and sell them in the lands to the south.

C. - KINDS OF PAYMENT.

I. - Hard cash.

Thanks to the growing contribution of money coming from abroad, many payments can be made in cash. However the Gurungs, like many other highland peoples in Nepal, have not yet accepted the use of paper money. The Indian rupee notes which the soldiers bring are changed, with the Newar or Thakali merchants at Pokhara or at Birethāti, into Nepalese one or half-rupee pieces which contain a certain amount of silver. It is impossible to make payments in Nepalese bank notes. During all my stay among the Gurungs, I had to carry very heavy weights of money [3]. Even in the village of Mohoriya where I stayed for several months, I was never able to pay in paper money. There exists a certain mistrust, especially among women, for notes are neither as verifiable or recognisable as coins. A payment is made by counting the coins on the ground. One puts them in piles of five coins after having felt them to see that their surface is not cracked or worn. A coin has a value much more tangible than paper "which does not weigh anything, which does not make a noise, and which deteriorates in clothes soaked at the time of the monsoon" [54].

2. - Agricultural Produce.

Payment in agricultural produce, and above all in grain, is frequently made within the village, in particular for paying workmen before the harvests. There also exists a certain tendency not to part with money in coin if the payment can be made in grain or in days of work. There are two methods of paying in grain, using basket measures. One either fills the measure level with the edge, or else one piles on grain as long as it does not fall on the ground, forming a kind of pyramid above the upper edge of the measure. Payments are very rarely made in dairy produce since each household only produces for its personal consumption.

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[3] The weight of 45 rupees is 500 grammes (which was less than 3,000 fr. in 1958.

3. - Barter.

Barter of agricultural produce is very rare. But it is very common for obtaining salt. There is no salt in the central and western Gurung territory. The men of Mohoriya leave in a north-west direction, cross the high mountains and reach the valley of the Kali Gandaki. There they climb up to the north of Tukche, to Kopce which is two and a half days march away. There, they exchange salt for the cereals they have brought. The most advantageous transaction for them is when they bring rice. Sometimes, they also bring barley. For a *pathi* of rice, merchants, often coming from Tibet, give them 4 *pathi* of salt. The villagers return to the village in three days. A man carries as much as 8 or 9 *pathi*. According to my information, a *pathi* of salt weighs nearly 6 *śer* or 6 kilos. The total weight is therefore 48 to 54 kilos. An adult consumes nearly three *pathi* a year. It is necessary to add to the consumption of the family that of buffaloes, cows, goats and sheep. Village men leave as a group to go to the salt mines before and after the monsoon, during the dead season.

Payment for salt can also be made in money but the rate of exchange is less good as the inhabitants of the Kali Gandaki region and the Tibetans lack grain and prefer the exchange "cereals-salt" to the exchange "money-salt" [55].

4. - Day Labour.

In the villages where the *nogar* system is little developed or does not function, villagers work for their neighbours, who in turn go to work in the fields of the former following the principle of simple reciprocity. Poor people also arrange to pay for grain which is given to them in days of work for they do not have money and it would be difficult to repay with the small amount of grain which they harvest. Finally, note that a member of each family in Mohoriya has to give one day's unpaid labour to the headman of the village to compensate him for the time which he spends on village affairs.

D. - LAND OWNING.

The land-owning system of Nepal is very confused. There exist an impressive number of types of land without the difference between certain of them being clearly marked. The situation in Gurung country seems to be much simpler. At Mohoriya there are two categories of land. The first includes the forests which cannot be cultivated. They belong to the State which preserves the usufruct. When trees are cut there with the authorisation of the headman of the village, the price paid for each of them by the beneficiary is discharged in full to the *Adda*, the Provincial Government. The rest of the lands in the area had been bought from the Nepalese Government at the beginning of the 19th century by the founder of the village, for a half-rupee (*mohre*, hence the name of the village). An official document proves this. Certain villages have been founded on the lands offered by the King in recompense for the services rendered by a Gurung. These are called *birta* lands. Thus the villages of Lahdruk and Pēhckoi developed on *birta* lands given by the King of Nepal in 1800 to one of his Gurung officers named Khadgasu. These do not pay a land-tax to the King. For a long time the new inhabitants of the two villages did not pay taxes but, since the beginning of the century, the Nepalese Government has ordered them to pay. The villagers brought a law suit against the State. The final judgment declared that the land was only given in *birta* to Khadgasũ. His descendants and the other inhabitants of the village did not enjoy the same favour. The land undoubtedly belonged to the village, but an annual quit-rent was due to the state. Since that time, the villagers of Lahdruk and Pehckoi pay a land-tax. It is the same in Mohoriya which pays nearly 400 rupees per annum, two thirds of the sum being charged to the owners of rice fields. Rice fields are measured in square *jangir* (a Nepalese unit) and the quit-rent varies from 0.25 to 0.35 rupees per unit depending on the quality of the land.

Non-irrigated lands are classed in three categories:

- large fields (*hal*) for which the quit-rent is 1 rupee.
- medium fields (*pate*) for which the quit-rent is 0.75 rupees.
- small fields (*kodale*) for which the quit-rent is 0.50 rupees.

The tax is taken to the Provincial Government at Nowakot in Mid-April.

There are two kinds of official descriptions of the fields. The one (*phadgekodale*) gives the name of the field and precise

boundaries in regard to the four geographical directions. The other (*sabikodale*) does not specify the name of the land.[56]

I. - Acquisition.

Thirty or forty years ago, a large number of the village lands in the Modi Valley had not been distributed among the villagers [57]. Uncultivated land belonged to the village. When a man wanted to establish himself in a village, he asked the headman of the village for permission to settle and to clear the lands which were not used by anyone. If the *krōh*, the village headman, gave him permission, he became the owner of the pieces of land which he could cultivate and where he built his house. A certain amount of money had to be given to the village headman in exchange for the land. It seems that the *krōh* put this in the village chest.

The purchaser became the legal owner of the land the day that the *krōh* registered the lands newly acquired under his personal name at the *Adda* of Nowakot, where they are written on the tax role. Only registration of the land is accepted as a proof of ownership. Male children, and in their absence a male agnate, can inherit property. The latter is personal. It belongs to the head of the house. We will specify these facts when we study the rules of succession.

All the lands in Mohoriya are now cleared and have legal owners. Acquisition of property may occur through inheritance and by various forms of transfer, sale or as a temporary security for a loan, a procedure which is often followed by the surrender of the land. The Gurung is extremely attached to his land. It is therefore only under considerable pressure, when a further delay is refused, that a person decides to sell. If an offer is made by an agnate, it is almost always preferred to that of a member of another lineage or another clan. Sales of land are not very frequent [58]. In fact, despite a significant number of relatively poor houses, the balance of money brought by the soldiers enables many of them to have enough to feed themselves without having to risk the future by selling the land. Sales are made mainly when lands are divided between sons. Certain of them have left the village and settled with their families in India or wherever they work. Not intending to return to the village, they sell their part to their brothers. Sometimes

a family dies out without leaving any successors in the village. Often, before his death, the head of the family without sons bequeaths his lands to a son-in-law. The latter, not living in the village, sells the lands of his father-in-law to use the money from the sale in the village where he lives with the daughter of the deceased. The soldiers who have saved and been promoted are often keen to buy lands, above all if they are from fairly poor families. Thus they can affirm their new social prestige by adding to the respect that they gain for their high rank, the comfort acquired thanks to a large landed property. Those who are rich and respected in Gurung territory are always the owners of much land.

The price of lands varies. It depends on the soil, climate, the location in the village, the ease of access, and the dangers of erosion. It is necessary to note here that the shape of the land is always changing. During the monsoons, whole sections of mountain fall down into the Modi Valley. Landslides occur in many of the fields. I have witnessed many of these minor catastrophes which ruin the owners, finally destroying the fields or, at least, the crops for that year. The villagers repair the terraces, making them anew in the rubble and protecting their lands against erosion in a thousand and one ways. But the massive clearing of the slopes prevents an effective struggle against the latter. [APPENDIX B]

Land is measured by taking as a base the number of *muri* of grain which it produces. A *muri* of maize is worth 300 rupees in the region of the village. In the lowlands the price is cheaper (200 rupees). The price of irrigated land varies from 300 to 500 rupees per *muri* of non-husked rice produced [59].

Landed property is often used as a security for a money loan. The person who receives the security is always a Gurung of the village or of a neighbouring village. There are enough rich families in Gurung territory to offer loans to borrowers. Moreover, contracts between the several small urban centres to the south and the Gurung villages are very limited and difficult. The town lender would be in a bad position to keep control of his security and to regain possession of funds lent.

In a contract for a money loan, one can treat landed property in three different ways. In the first case, if, at a date fixed, the borrowed sum has not been repaid, the lender receives in compensation the landed property stipulated in the agreement. Or else the lender receives land as security while the borrowed sum is still unpaid. He cultivates it, has the

usufruct, but when he returns the land, he must deduct the interest which is due to him from the amount of the usufruct which he has taken through the use of the pledged land. In the third case, everything happens as before, except that the lender receives the complete interest without subtracting the total of the usufruct of the land which was received in pledge. In a great many cases, the borrower asks and then asks again for delays lasting several years, always hoping that one day he will be able to repay. But as a contract has been drawn up in the official forms and has been signed, there is never any confusion as to the ownership of the land, even if in reality it has been in the possession of the lender for a long time. If the tired creditor wants to acquire the ownership of the land, he asks the debtor to go with him to the *Adda* so that the pledged land can be henceforward registered in his name, which puts an end to the contract and effects the transfer of the property. If the debtor refuses this solution, the only thing the lender can do is to go by himself to the *Adda* at Nowakot and to start an action in law showing the contract which had been signed by the two parties. When he wins the case, the transfer of property is permitted at once. But the lender hardly ever uses this last method for he knows that, although he is sure to obtain justice, it will be a long time before the judgment is made and he will have to use large sums to pay all the expenses of the action before the tribunal. He contents himself with the possession of the pledged land, waiting until one day the other party changes his mind.

2. - Sharecropping.

This system of exploiting the land is common. It consists of giving the use of land to another villager during one or more years, on the condition that he cultivates it and then shares the harvest with the owner in payment for the usage. Depending on the fertility of the land, the division is a half each or else at the rate of one third to the owner and two thirds to the farmer. The large land-owners often have recourse to this system when the men of the family are soldiers abroad [60].

3. - Distribution of lands.

The majority of the villagers are small landowners. As a result of population growth, the lands are divided between greater and greater

numbers of families who are forced to clear and to construct new small terraces on the poor lands, which cut into the wooded soils of the high lands, where potatoes can be grown.

The terraced fields are small and dispersed. The list of property in a small part of Mohoriya revealed to me an incredible patchwork of lands belonging to an impressive number of houses. However, it is necessary to note that the lands of the same lineage are in many cases clustered together. The majority of families have lands in all regions of the village. Thus they can have various harvests at different seasons according to the climate and the nature of the soil. But this does not apply to the rice lands which are in the hands of a small minority of rich owners.

Possessing no figures for the area of the fields in Mohoriya, I have established classifications according to the type of production of the lands. There are 58 houses out of 94 which grow rice in Mohoriya but the majority of these only harvest one or two *muri* and the fields do not belong to them. They cultivate them as sharecroppers. There are only 27 families out of 94 who produce at least 8 *muri* of unhusked rice per year (4 *muri* of husked rice). About 30% of the population possess rice fields and this 30% represents the wealthy families of the village. This is a general phenomenon in Gurung territory. Those who produce more than 7 to 8 *muri* of rice are part of the privileged class from the economic point of view.

If one now considers the total cereal production of each household, one realises that there is a complete sliding scale from small production to surplus production. If we add together the exploitations having food budgets slightly deficient in cereals, those which are in balance and those which are slightly in excess, we have a mass of 70% of the households. 20% have a very clear deficit, 10% have a large surplus. It is none the less true that 50% of families do not have enough land to assure their food and must do other work.

SECOND PART

SOCIETY

In dealing with the social organisation of the Gurungs, its historical context must always be borne in mind if one is to understand the way it works, and the contradictions. Although it is impossible to go back very far in time for an accurate history of the Gurungs since they have been established in Nepal, it clearly appears that they lived through two very distinct periods. The first extends from the time of their arrival on the southern slopes of the Himalayas to that of the conquest of their country by men coming from India. The second, from the time of that conquest until today. The first period was very heavily marked by pre-Buddhist and post-Buddhist Tibetan influences, the second period by the latter together with those of the Hindu countries transmitted by the new invaders. We have to understand this historical perspective as the Gurungs it very often refer to it. We will see how Gurung hierarchy and the organisation of clans as it appears today has been influenced by Indian culture. But, nowadays, the Gurungs reject it. Since the time of Jang Bahadur (second half of the nineteenth century), many law-suits between Gurungs had taken place, one part of the population refusing to accept the inferior status given it by the other. The oft repeated argument is: "The Brahmins and the men of the south have divided our people into castes, but previously we were all equal and we wish to become so again."

It has seemed to me very necessary from now on to indicate the existence of this state of mind, to explain the confusion of much of the information that I collected. This situation forced me to examine it very carefully as it was often tainted with partiality. Unhappily, it was not always possible for me to do this. In my writing, I will therefore sometimes be obliged to simply describe the information gathered without being able to accompany it with a rigorous critique or an interpretation.

In the study that follows, I will avoid the use of the words "tribe" and "caste" to describe the Gurung population as a whole. Some English authors who have referred to the Gurungs often used the word "tribe". Although the Gurung people form a segregated group in space, their political organisation has nothing in common with that of a tribe as we shall see in what follows. The use of the word "tribe" therefore seemed to me to be incorrect. Can one speak of the Gurung "caste"? Yes, if one places them in the hierarchy of Nepalese society. But caste is not defined

only in relation to other castes, as having a certain place in the social hierarchy. It is defined also by its internal organisation. Yet the idea of hereditary professional specialisation is alien to the Gurung population. A Gurung can be a peasant, a carpenter, a merchant, a soldier, a priest, and his son is free to take any career he likes. The Gurung language has no word to express the idea of "caste". A Gurung calls the Bhotias (inhabitants of the border region between Nepal and Tibet) the *bhot-mai* "the bhotia men" (the Tibetans), and the *kamis* (blacksmith Untouchables) the *kami-mai*. If a Gurung meets a stranger, he asks him "What man are you?" to find what group the man belongs to. Therefore, to keep within a Gurung perspective as much as possible, I will avoid the use of the word "caste". I will content myself with using the expression "Gurung population", the Gurungs forming by their culture, a more or less distinct group from other groups which constitute Nepalese society.

CHAPTER V

CLAN AND HIERARCHICAL ORGANISATION

A. - CLANS AND CLAN GROUPS.

Gurung society is divided into clans. There is not, properly speaking, a Gurung word meaning "clan". One says: *kon-mai, lama-mai* that is to say "the *kon*" and "the *lama*", the people belonging to the *kon* clan, and to the *lama* clan.[61] When a Gurung wants to know the clan of another Gurung, he asks: "What Gurung are you?". The clan is exogamous and patrilineal, but it does not form a local unit. An ancient manuscript tends to show that it has not always been thus. The document in the possession of the village headman of Dangsing, written in Nepali and dated 1694, reads:

"The Gurungs established themselves in the Lamjung region. The *ghale* were concentrated around Kapancok and were divided into four

tughyu [1]. The *ghotane* settled at Koneardi, where they took the name of *Kon-thar-walayo-pardi* [2] (they are now called Konmai), the *lama* settled at Namjung and took the name of *Paegi-lama-thar-walayo* while the *lamechane* or *plon lamechane* installed themselves at Phi-proh".

There are strong reasons for believing that, as a result of a large increase in population, the Gurungs have emigrated to less populated regions, in search of lands to clear and for high pastures. Many families in the Modi Valley came there ten, twenty, thirty generations ago from the Gurung region centred around Lamjung [3]. This region includes the names given in the preceding quoted text.

The mass of clans are divided into two groups: those of the Carjat clan and those of the Solahjat clan. Except in one or two cases which we will look at later, there can be little doubt as to which of the two groups a clan belongs, and to one only. While each clan is exogamous, each of the two groups of clans is endogamous. In fact, we will see that the marriage rules are sometimes infringed. The two words Carjat (*cārjāt*) and Solahjat (*solahjāt* or *sorajāt*) are Nepali, *cār* and *solah* mean respectively "four" and "sixteen". For the word *jāt* or *jāti* which is used all over India in the sense of "caste" and in other senses, Turner gives the following translations in his Nepalese dictionary : kind, species, tribe, nation, caste. None of these senses can be used for the expressions which interest us. I propose to translate Carjat by "the four clans", Solahjat by the "sixteen clans", for, as will be shown later on, it

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[1] Tib., *gduṅ-brgyud*; *gduṅ*: family; *rgyud*: lineage (JÄSCHKE, Tib. Engl. Dict., p. 124)

[2] *kon-e* : gur. : of the *kon* or *ghotane*. - *thar* : nep. : clan (also tribe, class, sub-caste, R.L. TURNER, *Nepali Dictionary*, 1931, p. 294). - *walayo* : of *wālā*, nep., suffix indicating possession. - *pardi* : of *pardes*, nep. (skrt. *paradeśa*) : foreign country, (often) another place in the same country. I think that it is necessary to read *konepardi* for *koneardi*.

[3] I was able to verify that the population of the valley of the Modi has increased greatly since the beginning of the 19th century. On the other hand, many legends tell how, "the population being very dense, a certain number of families were forced to emigrate". Finally, the genealogical information collected in the same valley indicated the place of origin of the ancestors.

is clan rules and not caste rules, for instance, which characterise the four units of the Carjat group.

We will see that it is generally understood that there are four Carjat clans, but, in fact, there are more than four. As for the Solahjat clans, no one could give a list of sixteen names. Had one ever existed? I doubt it, considering the fantastic list contained in Legend II (below). In reality the numbers four and sixteen are not just purely descriptive, they indicate a difference of status, the less numerous group having a superior status to the more numerous group, according to a formula widespread in the Gangetic plain, and whose spirit is exactly reproduced here (Legend II, below). [APPENDIX C]

B. - LEGENDS OF ORIGIN.

The actual situation is made clearer if we consider the history of the Gurungs. In particular, there are the texts, which I will call legends, relating the origin of the Gurungs [4]

Legend I.

This text in Nepali [5] does not come from the Gurungs but from the east of Nepal where the Rais and Limbus live.

"The *Kirāti* are the oldest inhabitants of Nepal. Soyenbumanu who lived in the land of Hemonta had several children, The second, Thoiñua, went off towards Japan. The third went towards Thailand, Burma and Cochin-China. The eldest went towards China, then Tibet, and arrived at the northern frontier of India. His name was Muñaiñua. He had ten children : Yoktumba, founder of the Limbus, Apliñua, Yakakowa, founder of the race of the Rais, Luñpheba, founder of the

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[4] The majority of legends are known by a considerable number of Gurungs since the very recent publication, mainly in Kathmandu, of several pamphlets or articles, which more or less exactly reproduce the original manuscripts. These, written in Nepali for at least a century, are found in the hands of some Gurungs who, for reasons which we will see later, are often not very keen to show them.

[5] Old legend reproduced by Til Bahadur (Limbu) in *Hāl-Khabar*, Kath mandu, 1st Chait 2013 (1957).

Larus, Thaṅpheba, Suhacepa, founder of the Sunwars (Chepangs, Thamis), Gurupa, founder of the Gurungs, Mankapa, founder of the Magars, Toklokapa, founder of the Thakālis, Tamangs and Sherpas, Thaṅdawa, founder of the Tharus and of the Danwars. For thirty-three generations, the *Kirāti* governed at Kathmandu" [6].

Legend II [7].

The King of Kaski asked his brahmin priest to explain to him the origin of the Gurungs and of the Carjat and Solahjat divisions. The Brahmin told him as follows:

There was a king of the Bharadvaja gotra who belonged to the *Suryajā* dynasty. He had two sons. The older, Locan, was not loved by his parents as much as Nocan, the younger, who was their favourite. They did not respect the rule of succession and crowned their younger son while disinheriting their elder. Locan felt great pain and came to doubt the value of the things of this world. One day, he left the palace and directed his steps towards the Himalayas to lead the life of an ascetic there, accompanied by his wife Kali and his priest, the son of Mukunda Acharye, of Garga gotra. The latter took with him, his wife Kasi. A slave, Kesai Singh, of Khowase, and his wife Phali, completed the group. On the road they met two prostitutes and passed the night in the same shelter as them. While the prince and the priest slept, the two prostitutes broke their *janaï.* (brahmanic threads) and poured some wine on their lips, then they ran away. When the prince and priest awoke, they understood that they had been dishonoured [8]. Henceforth they could

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[6] M. HERMANNS writes in *The Indo-Tibetans*, p. 14 : "The Gurungs have a tradition according to which they claim to come from Po-hiung, a land which lies beyond Nepal, somewhere in Tibet". "Po" denotes Tibet (tib., *bod*, pron. *pö*); did M.H. understand "*po-hiung*" to be *pö-yul*, the land of Tibet, central Tibet?

[7] According to a text in Nepali published by Kabi SIKARNATH SUBEDI PANDIT (*Guruṅko vaṃśāvali*, Benares).

[8] Several versions of the tale of the pollution of the prince exist. The most widespread does not have the scene of a prince coming from the south, nor of the prostitutes, but a *ghale* king (Carjat) coming from the north and his *klihbrī* servant (Solahjat), priest of the Solahjat clans and an enemy of the lama, priest of the Carjat

no longer belong to their caste. They established themselves in the Himalayas and there dug a shelter in which to live... One day, they said to their slave, "You have always been faithful to us. From the beginning of this morning, you are no longer a slave. You will call yourself Ker Singh Thapa and we will eat the food which you prepare. The Himalayas are pure mountains. Here, we can eat the food of a man of an inferior caste"... The princess had three sons : Ghale Mahan Gurung, Ghotane Mahan Gurung, Lama Mahan Gurung, and one daughter, Lakshmi. The wife of the priest had two sons of which the elder was Lamechane Mahan Gurung and the younger Plone Lamechane Gurung, and three daughters, Kumari, Nari and Mali. Later on, the children of the prince married the children of the priest. The sons of the prince were the first *ghale*, *ghotane*, and *lama*, and those of the priest the first *lamechane* [9]. Thus were born the four Carjat clans. The name of Mahan was given to them because of their aptitude at meditation. The wife of Ker Singh brought forth ten girls and sixteen sons with the names Pajgyu Thapa, Nor Thapa, Kepcae Thapa, Timcẽ Thapa, Procae Thapa, Yoca Thapa, Khulal Thapa, Kromcae Thapa, Gabri Thapa, Dorsae Thapa, Bhaecae Thapa, Kokae Thapa, Kucae Thapa, Namcae Thapa, Leṅae Thapa, Rupcae Thapa. They founded the sixteen Solahjat clans. The brothers and sisters later intermarried.

...A man of the *namcae* clan (Solahjat) abused a *ghotane* girl. Because the man was not killed by the Carjat, the Solahjat asked for pardon: "We will be your servants, we will sweep your paths and sprinkle them with dew, we will walk behind you carrying your load and your shoes, we will eat your leftovers...". Intermarriage was forbidden. But a Carjat could approach a Solahjat woman whereas the reverse would be punished...

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clans. Thus Hermanns (*loc. cit.*, p. 16) reports that : "a *ghale* (Carjat) travelled with a Gabring slave (*klihbrī*). During the night, Vishnu appeared to the Gabring: "Take his *janae* (holy thread) and pour some alcohol into his mouth" he told him. The Gabring did what he was told and the *ghale* was polluted."

[9] A single descendant of the priest as opposed to three descendants of the king : allusion to a difference of status? But one can obviously not make the Buddhist *lama* descend from the Brahmin priest. In reality, in the west of the country at least, the *lamechane* are never priests while the *lama* are.

...their number increased so they went across into the region of Lamjung and made the oldest of the *ghale* their king. King Sahi of Nowakot defeated the Ghale king, but the Solahjat wished to live close to the Carjat. They established themselves at Lamjung, Kaski, and Ghandrung.

One can see that this text is a legend of a pure Hindu type establishing an hierarchical dichotomy of a kind frequently found in the Gangetic plain [10], and in which the ending alone refers to real localities and may be an historical fact. The Gurung population is presented as not having pre-existed the Hindu influence.

Legend III.

This text is of a completely different character from the preceding one. "Genealogy of the Gurungs" is in fact a genealogy of the *can*, presented as the Rajputs, and a chronicle of their rivalry with the local kings, the *Ghale* [11].

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[10] For example, W. CROOKE, *The Tribes and Castes of the North -West Provinces and Oudh*, vol. IV, p. 268. "One division among the Sanadh Brahmans is into the "three-and-a-half houses" (*sārhe-tīn ghar*) and the "ten houses" (*das ghar*). The former are considered superior and a system of hypergamy prevails among them by which the "three-and-a-half houses", for a money consideration, take brides from the "ten houses" and do not give them girls in exchange". (By "houses" it is necessary to understand "local descent group".) Cf. *Census of India*, 1901, *U.P. Report*, p. 210 (Khattri: 2 1/2, 4, 12, 52); - SHERRING, M.A., *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Calcutta, 1881, vol. I, p. 62 sq. (Sarasvati Brahmans: 5, 8, 12, 52 *jāti*).

[11] This story is taken from two Nepali texts, one by Yogi NARHARI NATH, *Gurung Ghale Raja hamko vaṃśāvali*, Kathmandu, History Association, 2012 (1956), the other by Sher BAHADUR GURUNG, *Guruṅko vaṃśāvali*, Gurung Welfare Association, 2013 (1957). These texts summarize (I cannot say how accurately) a manuscript owned by Man Bahadur, who lives near Gurkhe (Mātilokot). This manuscript (roll) is five feet wide and fifteen feet, six inches long, and is dated 14 Fagun 1766 (Saka Era: 1844 by our reckoning). In Man Bahadur's manuscript it is said that the original is to be found at Siddacalmrigasthaligorchapitanam (*siddacal* : mountain?; *mrigasthali* : place where one finds mountain game?; *gorcha*; : Gorkha?; *pitanam*. from *pattaṇam* : town) in the kingdom of Syartancangyasurtan (*syar* : *śar*, tib. : is; *cangya* : *saṅs-rgyas*, tib. : Buddha), the first Gurungs establishing themselves at Syartanpatreasurtan. Gurung informants do not know these countries.

Sher Chandra Singh, of the Bharadvaja gotra, was born at Bundelkhanda. His son Vishnu Chandra went to Rajputana and his descendants lived there until the eighth generation. Intermarriage took place. A descendant, Balbhadra, reigned at Chitor. For twenty-four generations, the *can* reigned at Kumaon. The chronicle gives a list of twenty-five names. In the twenty-fifth generation, Bir Singh had three sons. The first stayed in Kumaon, the second went to Doti (West Nepal), the third, Bilcan, went to Khumir. All his descendants bore the name of *can* [12]. He had three sons, Manekcan, Gopican and Mahancan. Manekcan became king of Pyuthan (in Magar territory, to the south-west of Gurung country). Gopican - or in another version Mahancan - reigned at Arghā (according to informants, in the province named "Kaski W. no. 3" to the south-west of Gurung country) and had two sons, Locan and Nocan, whose rivalry ended with the departure of Locan for the Himalayas (cf. Leg. II). Mahancan [13] had two sons, Atalcan and Mekcan. Nocan became unpopular, he was driven out and replaced by Atalcan.

Nocan then went to Beni (on the Kali Gandaki river which marks the border of Gurung territory to the west without being included in it). He came into contact with the *ghale* kings of Bhalewa, Thantap and Ghalkot (probably Ghalekot). The King of Ghalkot, after having imprisoned him, gave him the choice of being killed or of living in alliance. Nocan agreed to live in peace near to the *ghale* king. He and his brother Nupacan threw their sacred threads into the Kali Gandaki. They fled to Kumaon, then Nocan went to Lupro (in Gurung territory) and had three sons: Harcan, Lohacan, and Locan. They went towards Lhowala, Purzo, and Yomangai. They encountered two lamas on the road, Paetikyal and Tughya and a *ghale* king, whom they conquered and whose three daughters married the three sons of Nocan (or else Nocan killed a lama and defended the *ghale* king). The *ghale* king killed five of the seven other sons of Nocan by magic, and the last two fell gravely ill. On the advice of a brahmin, a lama was called who cured them. They then

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[12] Note the transition of "chandra" (or *cand*), which indicates the lunar dynasty (in place of the solar mentioned in Legend II) to *can*. We will see that this word has other affinities.

[13] Cf. the title of Mahan Gurung given to a Carjat in Legend II.

took the name of Thorcan and Phaecan (or Paecan) and adopted lama beliefs. Phaecan learnt the science of a lama and was called "guru". He married a daughter of the *ghale* king and had a son, Ranbhim, who had the appetite and strength of a giant and conquered all his enemies.

He went to Siklis and wished to marry the daughter of a *ghale* king. Instead of his daughter, the king sent a servant. Ranbhim discovered this and cursed the *ghale* king who, being afraid, recalled Ranbhim and said to him: "Go to the fountain. Two women will be there. If you can distinguish my daughter from the servant, my daughter will be yours". An old servant of the princess, hidden twenty-five metres from the fountain under a basket, told Ranbhim which of the women was the daughter of the king, and Ranbhim chose the princess. The latter married the descendant of the *can*. (A Gurung legend says that the children of Ranbhim and the servant gave birth to the Solahjat clans, while those of Ranbhim and the princess were the ancestors of the Carjat clans). Thorcan went and established himself at Kongi [14] and Phaecan at Lamjung. Phaecan had four grand-sons: Tungi, Pungi, Kaogi, Migi (in another version: Tongi, Kongi, Pugi, Phengi). They lived at Heprohphiproh [15]. Phaecan's brahmin priest had two sons, *Lewe lamechane* and *Plone lamechane* belonging to the Garga gotra. After a number of intermarriages, the four clans appeared, *lama*, *lamechane*, *ghale* and *ghotane*. The King of Lamjung being dead, five men named Pocal, Bhandari, Sawal, Dura and Chimsa, went to Nowakot to bring back the son of King Kalo Sahi and to put him on the throne of Lamjung. The *ghale* king of Pojo lured the new prince into a trap and killed him. The five men placed the young brother of the dead man on the newly vacant throne. They called the *can* (Kukikyal, Sabakyal, Purukyal, Kaokyal) to defend him. The *can* killed the King of Pojo by drowning him in the Marysandi river. Since that time, the *ghale* have not drunk the water of that river. The King of Lamjung occupied the country of Pojo and gave it to the *can* who had helped him the administration of his kingdom. He then married a daughter of the *ghale* king. Finally, it is shown that all, *ghale*, *can* and others were henceforth called Gurungs.

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[14] Cf. *Koneardi* in the text cited (p.158)

[15] *he* : high lands; *phi* : high (?); *proh* : mountain. According to the text cited (p.158), the *lamechane* established themselves at Phi-proh.

Compared with the previous one, this text is rather confused as to the origin of the clans and does not make direct reference to the Carjat or Solahjat. However, it describes well the infiltration of people coming from India into the mountainous region of Central and West Nepal, a fact generally admitted by historians.[16] These people, the *can*, found a population already there, and if, here also, they lost the sacred thread, it was so as to adapt themselves to local customs. Not only did the new-comers come up against the *ghale* kings, and encounter the local priests, the lamas, but they gradually mingled with the local population, marrying the daughters of the *ghale* kings and, along with Thorcan and Phaecan, adopted the religion of the lama who had saved them. The name of Thorcan is certainly an example of the distortion by a Hindu chronicler of a name which is not Indo-Aryan [17]. Later on, the *can* helped the princes also coming from India to establish their influence in Gurung country by achieving the expulsion of the *ghale* kings. From these princes was born the Gorkha dynasty which reigns to this day in Nepal. In recompense for their service, the *can* received lands and administered the country.

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[16] Cf. Sylvain LÉVI, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 253-64. The traditional account giving the prestigious origin of the first king of Gorkha, in Sylvain Lévi (pp. 254-5), presents numerous analogies with the parts of Legend III relating the origins of the *can* and the conquest of the thrones of Kaski and Lamjung.

[17] Thorcan has been written for *rdor-'čhaṅ*, "who holds the vajra", the current name in Tibet for a religious person. Phaecan or Paecan contains *phae* or *pae* which signifies "of Tibet", or "Tibetan". In the text on p.158, we have the expression *pae-gi lama*, the lama of Tibet. In the two names Thorcan and Phaecan, *can* has been introduced to make these persons and their descendants into the lineage of the *can*. According to the history of Kumaon, Buchanan has written: "It is generally agreed, that the founder of the family of Kumaun was Thor Chandra, a needy, but high descendant of the family of the Moon, who about 350 years ago, left Jansi or Pratishtan, opposite to Allahabad, in quest of fortune" (Francis BUCHANAN (HAMILTON), *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, 1819, p.29).

C. - THE CARJAT CLANS.

I. - Names.

The Gurungs often denote the four Carjat clans (especially in the west of their territory) by the Gurung word *plih-gi* (*plih* : four, tib. *bźi*); - *gi* is never used by itself, one finds it in names such as: *tu-gi*, *pu-gi*, *mi-gi*, which are the segments of the clan; but *mi-gi*, for example, is the name of a clan for the Gurungs of the east and a name signifying the segment of a clan, the lineage, for the Gurungs of the west; *gi*, in fact, seems to qualify the name of a group of persons with a common ancestor, and this hypothesis is confirmed if one compares *gi* with *skye* (tib. to be born)[18].[62]

The *plih-gi* or Carjat comprise four clans which are in general enumerated in the following order:

ghale
ghotane (or *ghotani*)
lama
lamechane (or *lamechani*)

The Gurungs give this list when they speak in Nepali. In a Gurung context, the inhabitants of the west have a tendency to replace *ghotane* by *kon* and *lamechane* by *plon*. Nevertheless, certain informants distinguished *lamechane* from *plon lamechane*. It is interesting to note the way in which the four names given in the first place are grouped phonetically:

ghale	*lama*
ghotane	*lamechane*

Two of these names start with *lama* or *lame*. The second name of each pair ends with *tane* or *chane*. On the other hand, while *ghale* and *lama* have a Gurung sound (or Tibetan), the suffix *chane/tane* or even

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[18] The muffled guttural sounds in Tibetan often correspond to the resonant guttural sounds in Gurung.

ne/ni is not used anywhere else in the Gurung language. As the Gurungs use mainly *kon* and *plon* in place of *ghotane* and *lamechane*, it may therefore be that the two last names are more recent than the two monosyllabic names. When I asked my informants about the origin of *ghotane* and *lamechane*, they often responded: "They are words invented by the Chetris and Brahmins". Let us remember also that in the short chronicle relating the place where each of the Carjat clans established itself (p. 158), it is said that the *ghotane* settled at Koneardi, that is to say in the country of the Kon.

In what follows, I will use for preference the list:

ghale	*lama*
kon	*plon*

which is more homogeneous and more representative of Gurung nomenclature.[63]

2. - The Tibetan Background.

These names are very probably of a previous period to that of the Hindu influence on which the legends give information. At the same time, local legends, the remains of ancient buildings, and the presence of *lama-Gurung* in the region adjoining the Tibetan frontier [19] give good reasons to believe that the Gurungs have migrated to the southern slopes from the northern slopes of the Himalayan chain, and had been in contract with the Tibetans before submitting themselves to the authority of princes of Indian origin. Our purpose is not to write an hypothetical history of the Gurungs. Our task consists of understanding the actual

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[19] Kawakita cites some information given by a *lama-Gurung* of Braga (a village in the valley of the Marysandi, to the north of Annapurna): "...long ago, the people in our Northern valley were being harassed by robbers who came over the Southern mountain (he was referring to the Annapurna mountains). At that time, there was a lama in our Northern valley who by some device made it impossible for the robbers to cross the mountains. By the same token, we were unable to get out. Hence, though we are all Gurungs, our customs differ on opposite sides of the mountains". (Jiro KAWAKITA, *Peoples of Nepal Himalaya*, vol. III, p. 215).

organisation which observation reveals, but for this it is useful to compare these obscure aspects of Gurung reality from aspects known about Tibetan and Indian society. Thus the names of Gurung clans are clearly illuminated by Tibetan terms:

a) *ghale* (Risley : *ghaleh*, *ghale* (Gurungs of Darjeeling) is perhaps a variant of *gyal*, *ghyal*, *gyel*, which signifies "king" - *rgyal(-po)* is the Tibetan word for king. All the information agrees in saying that the kings of Gurung country were *ghale*. Also, one might suggest the hypothesis that the word had at one time indicated the royal office.

b) *kon-ghotane* (Risley [20] : *ghoneh*). The analysis of these terms does not enable one to formulate a precise hypothesis. Must one consider *kon* and *ghotane* as two words without etymological connection? Can one reconcile *kon* to *gho*, and *kon* to *ghoneh*? The study of different Gurung dialects shows that the same word can be pronounced with an initial consonant muffled or resonant, aspirated or non-aspirated -*ko*-, *go*-, *kho*-, *gho*-, - two of these forms sometimes appear in the same dialect: *ghoneh* (and *kon*?) may be related to *go-gnas* (tib. pronounced *ko-nē*) which signifies "an official position" - *go-pa* (from *mgo* : head; *pa* being the substantive masculine particle) is commonly employed in Tibetan for the "headman of the village" [21]. According to the Gurung tradition, the *kon* were the administrators of the *ghale* kings. Today, many of the village headmen belong to the *kon* clan. (For *ghotane*, see below p. 171-2).

c) *lama* is without doubt the Tibetan word *bla-ma*: priest (pronounced *la-ma*) - the name of this clan also indicates a function : the office of the priest. All the same, the word *lama* is not only used in Nepal in this limited sense. In Gurung, *lama-mi* is a lama priest, *lama-mai* the (member of the clan) lama; *lama* can also describe lamaists, those who believe in Tibetan lamaism. In Nepali, *lāmā* indicates a "lama priest, an inhabitant of Tibet" (Turner, p. 554, as in Kumaonese *lāmo*) and "a believer in lamaist religion". Certain Nepalese groups are called by the term *lama* alone or attached to another name. Thus, the *lama-*

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[20] H.H. RISLEY, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, vol. I.

[21] 2. JÄSCHKE, *op. cit.* p. 95: P. CARRASCO, *Land and Polity in Tibet*, p. 281.

Gurung to the north of the Annapurna range, the *lama-Tamang*, to the north of the Kathmandu valley, who are sometimes given the simple name of *lama* [22]. By using these names, these Nepalese wish to distinguish themselves from other Nepalese, considered as Buddhist lamaists and near Tibetans in their culture. B.H. Hodgson informs us of an analogous attitude among the *lama-murmi*, distinguishing themselves from the *murmi* at the beginning of the 19th century [23].

In the case of the Gurungs, we do not know at which epoch a group took the name of *lama* and so distinguished itself from other groups in the sense that the lama priests were uniquely chosen from among them.

d) *plon*, *lamechane*: *plon* may be linked to *blon*, tib., pronounced *lön*. It is common to find the same word in Tibetan and in Gurung, pronounced in Gurung as it is written in Tibetan and not as it is pronounced in that language. On the other hand, the resonant labial consonant of a Tibetan word is often pronounced as an unsounded labial consonant in Gurung. E.g. *bla* (tib. soul) pronounced *la* becomes in Gurung *plah* (*h* indicates a higher tone). These remarks enable us to identify *plon* (gur.) with *blon* (tib.); *blon* signifies a high official, a civil or military officer, and one comes across it in many expressions concerning ranks in the governmental hierarchy. At the moment, a significant number of Gurung villages have as their leader a member of the *plon* clan.

The word *lamechane*, which seems to be connected to *lama*, will be discussed later (pp. 171-2). We may merely indicate here that *mčhod-gnas* (tib) pronounced *čhö-nē* means "chaplain", "priest of the village" and also "sacrificer", "priest who makes the offering" (Jäschke, p. 167).

To sum up: the four ancient names, *ghale*, *kon*, *lama*, *plon* seem to have, originally, put emphasis on the political or religious functions of the groups which they designated. These groups would have constituted a privileged class in pre-Hindu Gurung society. This class would have included the small local kings, the functionaries (collectors

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[22] E. VANSITTART, *Gurkhas*, p. 139, *lāmā*.

[23] B.H. HODGSON, Ms., vol. 5, pp. 53 *verso*, *sq*.

of taxes) and councillors, and a category of hereditary priests. An analogous situation seems to have predominated at the same time in Tibet and in certain peripheral Himalayan countries [24]. A certain right to the land or the revenue of the land seems to have constituted the essential privilege of the class which we have tried to describe.[64]

3. - The Hindu contribution and the reality.

Hindu influence has not only introduced a rigid distinction between Carjat and Solahjat, and replaced *kon* by *ghotane*, *plon* by *lamechane*, it has also, I believe, introduced a distinction within the "four clans" between the lords and priests. This distinction is very clear in Legend II where, we may recall, three clans descended from the lord, the fourth, *lamechane*, from the priest. It is natural that these things should be less obvious in Legend III, which makes allowance for the *ghale* and the *lama* priests as pre-existing. However the distinction one encounters here is that between two forms, one proper form and one form borrowed from Legend II. This is firstly the distinction between *Thorcan* and *Phaecan*, the former associated by his name to the power (*vajra*) and associated territorially to Kongi, the land of the *kon*, or the *ghotane* according to the document cited (p. 158), the latter becoming the lama-priest, and *guru*. One can infer that the lord gave birth to the *ghotane*, the priest, to some degree, the *lama*. As for the *lamechane*, they were explicitly born, as in II, of a priest, who paradoxically is Phaecan's brahmin priest.

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[24] Describing the political organisation of Tibet before the 11th century, Carrasco wrote: "The noblemen who formed the ruling class seem to have been local rulers in provinces of their own. Some of them have been originally the chiefs of small principalities and their councillors (*blon*), who became subjects to the kings of the ruling dynasty....These noblemen also participated in the king's government, serving him as ministers (*blon*). A political office held by a nobleman tended to become hereditary, as is clearly attested in the case of the officials mentioned in the *źol* inscription at Lhasa". After the assassination of the king *Glair-dar-mar* in 842, "Tibet dissolved into a number of petty states headed by local dynasties that descended from the kings of the dynasty of their ministers, or by new families" (P.CARRASCO, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19).

The *lama* being associated with the priesthood, linguistically and also in fact, the whole outcome is the classification of four clans in two categories:

Lords	*Priests*
ghale	*lama*
ghotane	*lamechane*

One realises that such a distinction may have been admitted by those Gurungs who revived it for the ancient privileged local groups to put themselves in the new hierarchical Hindu framework. It is possible that the relatively less privileged groups, such as the *kon*, may have profited from the dispossession of the *ghale*, perhaps allying themselves occasionally with the invaders in driving out the *ghale*. At Siklis, according to informants, the *ghale* king was driven out by the *kon* or *ghotane*. In that area, 85 houses out of a little more than 400 are occupied by *ghotane* families.[65]

It will be noticed that the ancient differentiation in political functions which we thought existed between *ghale*, *kon* and *plon*, have disappeared: the *ghale* are no longer kings, and the members of the three other clans can equally be headmen of the village. This distinction of functions seems on the whole to have been replaced, under Hindu influence, by the distinction between Lords and Priests. This last corresponds, it is true, to the functional distinction which opposed the *lama* to the other clans. Yet it is different, as it is hierarchical in its Hindu spirit if not in fact, it applies equally to all four clans, and finally it is not functional since it includes without justification the *plon* or *lamechane* among the priests.

The term *lamechane* itself is difficult to analyse. Risley signals the existence at Darjeeling of Gurung clans (*thar* or sept) called *lāmi chhanya*, *lamsani* and *chheni lama* [25] and these names seem to be found

[25] *Op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 5, 14, 204.

among other Nepalese mountain peoples, such as the Magars (see below). There is a certain parallel between *lamechane* and *ghotane* in relation to *lama* and *ghale* respectively. One can immediately make two hypotheses. Either these words result from the distortion of words created from the two former (*ghotane* : *ghal-can*; *lamechane*: *lama-can*) and then the substitution of ancient names by prestigious names was made because they were built on *ghale* and *lama*. Or else they result from the distortion of Indian names brought by the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, and are prestigious for that reason.

Hodgson cites, in a list of *thar* of Upadhyaya Brahmins from the east of Nepal the names *lāmichānia* (*garga* gotra) and *gōtaniya* ("*kousik*" gotra) [26]. We cannot say for certain that the Brahmins have adopted Gurung names or the reverse. The example of *can* even suggested that one can profitably question the similarities between the two vocabularies. In the list of clans and lineages of the Magars given by Vansittart, each of the six principal clans included a lineage called *lāmchane*. Now the majority of the Magar lineages have prestigious Indian names: *chitor*, *kanoje*, *nagabansi*, etc. (*op. cit.* pp. 87-9).

The classification into two clans opposed two against two was probably always an ideal. It is thus so today, for, as I said at the beginning, there are more than four Carjat clans. In the valley of the Modi, for example, I have noted the existence of two other clans, *paṭ* (which probably signifies "Tibetan") and *lem* (a variant for *leh* or *le*?, cf. Legend III). In his classification, Vansittart (*op. cit.* p. 79) has considered that *lem* is a name of a lineage of the *plon*. My informants also agree to class the *lem* with the *plon* while affirming that they belong to two different clans. I think that one cannot see there the result of a process of segmentation, but, on the contrary, an effort to merge into one group two originally distinct clans. As for the *paṭ*, they were sometimes classed with the *plon*, sometimes with the *lama*. Some say that they form a separate clan. But, I have noted numerous cases where the *paṭ* had

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[26] B.H. HODGSON, Ms., vol. V, p. 66; *kousik* is certainly *kausik* or *kauśik*, very widespread in the north of India (cf. SHERRING, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. lx; R.V. RUSSELL and HIRALAL, *Castes and Tribes of the Central Provinces*, London, 1916, vol. I, p. 376). Risley gives also *gotanya* for a *thar* of the Nepalese Brahmins (*loc. cit.*)).

married with the *plon*, which would not have happened if the *paĩ* were classed with the *plon* (cf. p. 167).[66] The legends reflect the difficulty which faced their authors in incorporating certain clans into the narrow order of the Carjat classification. In the first generation of the *lamechane* clan, two people are mentioned, *lamechane mahan* and *plone lamechane* (Legend II), *lewe lamechane* and *plone lamechane* (Legend III). Risley (vol. 2, p. 14) indicates the existence of a *thar* or sept *lhe-bo lamsani* (*lhe* probably for *le* or *leh* as indicated in the quotation that follows; *lamsani* for *lamchane*). He adds that according to tradition, "two Gurungs, father and son, quarrelled and separated from each other. The father's party remained at *leh-bo* and the son's party emigrated to a distant place. The latter were called *lamsani tangi* (*tangi* in Gurung means separated)".

In ancient times and above all when the Gurungs were dispersed in the numerous Himalayan valleys, a process of segmentation must have taken place. But later on, under the influence of new rulers, a process of organised fusion occurred mainly to level the *ghotane* and *lamechane* clans. Under the name *lamechane* are grouped several clans which are in fact distinct from the *lamechane* clan. This process of fusion must have been accompanied by a process of addition of new groups. To the ancient privileged groups were probably added the groups closely allied by marriage to the newly established Kshatriyas and Brahmins, who recognised their privileged status. One fact is certain: numerically the *ghotane* and *lamechane* are much more numerous than the *lama* and above all of the *ghale*. At Ghandrung, a village of 3,000 inhabitants, there are only four *ghale* houses while more than a third of the population consider themselves as *lamechane*. At Mohoriya, there is only one *ghale* family. In the Lamjung region, the *ghale* are a little more numerous. At Ghalegaõ, which is built at the foot of a promontory where in ancient times stood a fort inhabited by the *ghale* king of Lamjung, the headman of the village is a *ghale*, which is a unique occurrence as far as I know.

4. - Rules of Carjat marriage.

Within the endogamous Carjat group there are rules of marriage. Take the following: *ghale* I, *kon* II, *lama* III, *plon* IV. I may not marry II, III may not marry IV, but I and II may marry III and IV, and III and IV may marry I and II. [67]

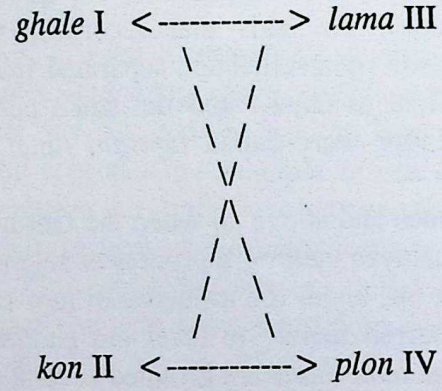

Figure 16

In fact, the Carjat are divided into two pairs of clans, that of the *ghale-kon* and that of the *lama-plon*, each forming an exogamous group[27].

The distinction between the two pairs *ghale-kon* (or *ghotane*) and *lama-plon* (or *lamechane*) matches with the ideal distinction between lords and priests. For example, all this happens as if *lama* and *lamechane* only form one single exogamous clan, a clan of priests.

The simplest hypothesis which one can make to explain the exogamous rules of the Carjat is to suppose that each of two exogamous

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[27]These rules of marriages are the same as those in force among the Kumarcen, a group of Tungus from the north; cf. SHIRIKOGOROFF, *Social Organisation of the Northern Tungus*, pp. 212-13, - and the Mao Naga; cf. T.C. HODSON, *The Naga Tribes of Manipur*, p. 73 (cited by C. LÉVI-STRAUSS, *Les structure élémentaires de la parenté*, p. 213 and pp. 466-7).

pairs (*ghale-ghotane* and *lama-lamechane*) is the result of a split into two groups with different names of a single exogamous group. In fact, as the mass of the Carjat population is composed of *ghotane* and *lamechane*, one could concede that the two other categories, *ghale* and *lama*, being much less numerous, shows a superior status within the exogamous group, *ghale* within *ghale-ghotane* and *lama* within *lama-lamechane*.

In general the Carjat rules of marriage are strictly followed by the four clans *ghale*, *kon*, *lama*, and *plon* in the Modi region. Other information seems to indicate that in the central and eastern part of Gurung territory, a considerable number of marriages do not conform to these rules. Furthermore, we have seen that among the Carjat there are, in reality, more than four clans. In the Modi valley, at Mohoriya, I have come across six cases of marriages contracted between *paĩ* and other Carjat, some between *paĩ* and *kon*, others between *paĩ* and *plon*, which tends to prove that the *paĩ* cannot, in fact, be inserted into the *ghale*, *ghotane*, *lama*, *lamechane* classification, and explains the confusion of the explanations given by the Gurungs.

D. - THE SOLAHJAT.

All the clans which are not included in the Carjat group are part of the Solahjat group. The nomenclature of this group is more muddled than that of the Carjat. No Gurung was able to give me a list of the sixteen Solahjat clans. The list given in Legend II is fanciful enough. Each name of a clan here is followed by *thapa*, which never appears in any Gurung name. The *thapa* constitute a Magar clan [28]. Two of these sixteen names, *rup-ce* and *pro-ce*, are unknown to my Gurung informants (*rup* from *rup* or *ru-pa*, gur., thread, line - in Tibetan *rus* or *rus-pa* signifies "bone" or "lineage" "family on the father's side" which is the side of the bone; *pro* signifies "Nepalese" in Gurung, e.g. *pro-kui* "the Nepalese language"). The long list given by Vansittart does not mention them either. The fourteen other names are, on the contrary, very

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[28] *kulāl* is the name of a lineage of the Magar clan *thapa* (VANSITTART, p. 89), but also that of a Gurung clan.

widespread. Vansittart (pp.78-80) gives 97 names of clans, Hodgson [29] 28 names, two Nepalese chronicles furnish 40 names [30]. Only one name is common to the five lists which I possess. Three are found in three of them. The list which Vansittart had gathered whilst he was an officer of Gurkha troops where thousands of Gurungs served, seems to be the most exhaustive. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to verify if all the names which he gathered were really those of clans and not of lineages. On the other hand, he has sometimes noted the same clan under two or three different names, the pronunciation of the same word changing according to the village of origin of the soldier who informed him.

Relying on my own information compared with the lists mentioned above, I have added a certain number of names which are, as far as it is possible to affirm, those of Solahjat clans (the largest exogamous patrilineal groups). This list of 27 names is certainly incomplete for I have only kept the clans which are represented in several valleys by an appreciable number of lineages or local descent groups.

alẽ
bhaezẽ (or *bhaecẽ*)
garbu
kepzẽ(or *kepcẽ*)
khulal
klihbrĩ
kokẽ
kromzẽ (or *kromcae*)
kroẽ
kupzẽ (or *kupcae*)
lahwõ
lehgẽ
mahpzẽ (or *mahpcae*)
mormẽ (or *muromẽ*)
norẽ
nume (or *paicẽ*)
panzẽ (or *pancae*)
plopo
pom
telẽ
tenla
thimzẽ (or *thimcae*)
tohrzẽ (or *tohrcae*)
yozcẽ (or *yojcẽ*)
zhimyal

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[29] B.H. HODGSON, *Essays on the Language*, Part II, p. 43.

[30] I do not use the list given by RISLEY (*op. cit.*, vol. II) for it was based on information collected at Darjeeling among the Gurungs who had emigrated for the most part from eastern Nepal. These Gurungs have not been in contact with the western Gurungs and have been assimilated by the local society. Certain names have been borrowed from the Rais and Limbus.

I have deliberately left on one side more than thirty names, which are for the most part etymologically non-Gurung, small groups who have come and established themselves in Gurung territory and who are now integrated into local society. That is why one finds names such as Regmi, Gharti, Pun which are common in other Nepalese peoples. It would be wrong to refuse the name "Gurung" to the people to whom the mass of the population accept as such [31] but, although these groups are nowadays Gurungs; I have preferred not to add their names to my list as each of these names only cover a limited number of scattered households.

Although unable to give a complete nomenclature, which only a systematic census will perhaps one day enable one to establish, I have tried to assemble a limited list of the majority of the clans which include a significant number of individuals. That a large number of secondary clans exist which have a foreign name, shows that Gurung society is not absolutely watertight and that it accepts into its midst non-Gurung peoples. Today, only the Solahjat absorb these new additions [32].

The above list proves that there are many more than sixteen Solahjat clans. The names show a certain homogeneity in the sense that sixteen names have their second syllable terminated by an *ē* and ten have the same second syllable: *zē* or *cē* or *cae*. In Tibetan, *chan* pronounced *chen* (Roerich: *ts'en*) signifies "order" or "class".

Several informants at Mohoriya and Ghandrung, who had given me the term *plih-gi* for Carjat, suggested to me the name *ku-gi* for Solahjat (*ku*: nine, tib. *dgu*). They insisted that there were never sixteen Solahjat clans, but only nine. Here is their list:

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[31] I have not included the names like *khulal*, *zhimyal* which are not Gurung and are encountered in the nomenclature of Magar lineages.

[32] There exists one small clan *ran* (nep. *rānā*) which was of relatively recent formation. One cannot really speak of this as either a Carjat or Solahjat group. But, in general, its members marry with the Carjat. The *ran* or *rana* descend from the Magars who live in Gurung territory. But since the *rana* clan has a high status among the Magars, the Gurungs have given its members a more privileged place than they normally do, classing Gurungs of recent origin among the Solahjat. The *ran* are, therefore, on the way to becoming attached to the Carjat group.

kercae	*mahpcae*
klihbrĩ	*paicẽ*
kupcae	*thimcẽ*
kromcae	*tohrcae*
lehṅe or *lehṅẽ*	

All the clans in this list are well known. They are all cited by Vansittart. The absence of other facts bearing on this prevents us from interpreting this list or the term *ku-gi*. Since the informants said that the clans were divided into two groups, the *plih-gi* and the *ku-gi*, it would seem to indicate the previous existence of a dichotomy of a certain kind before the dichotomy of Carjat-Solahjat appeared. The classification *ku-gi* may be ancient: firstly, the nine names in the list are Tibeto-Gurung; secondly, all the names of the Solahjat clans who founded the ancient villages such as Siklis are included in this list.

E. - THE CARJAT-SOLAHJAT HIERARCHY.

We have seen how the legends, and most particularly legend II, suggest a difference in status between Carjat and Solahjat and trace this to the ancestors of the two groups, kings and priests on the one hand, and slaves or servants on the other. This prompts us to ask two questions. Does this difference in status still exist? If it did exist, which is very likely, how should it be interpreted?

At present, nearly all the village headmen are Carjat, but they are assisted and advised by Carjat and Solahjat. Generally, the rich landed proprietors are Carjat. Rice is the cereal of the well-off people and a large proportion of the rice fields are in their hands. This is explicable if one recalls how new members of the village received land. The *krõh*, the headman of the village, was free to distribute lands. Profiting from this situation, many of the *krõh* had registered the uncultivated land in their own name with the provincial government, and thus become the owners. Later, when their families had grown, they were able to cultivate these lands previously registered without having to break up the lands of their ancestors, but it was not the same for the Solahjat families who had to divide land left by a dead man into smaller and smaller pieces

without being able to clear new lands. Carjat families have thus in their hands a great part of the administration and wealth of the country.

No particular religious role differentiates the Carjat from the Solahjat. In fact, if the lama belongs to the Carjat, the *pucu* and the *klihbrī* are Solahjat. All these priests are used equally by the two groups of clans. According to the headman of the *ghale* village of Ghalegao, the priests of the *ghale* kings were the *klihbrī* and not lama. In all the public religious events, the two groups mix without prerogative being given to one or the other. In his house, a Carjat receives a Solahjat with as much attention as a Carjat. Naturally, he is more gushing to a rich Carjat or to a member of his clan. An analogous situation is found among the Solahjat. Those who are rich, those who are of the same clan and those who are allied to the host are more fussed over than all others. One respects the man who is powerful, one receives with friendship those to whom you are attached by bonds of affinity.

Is the Solahjat Gurung a servant of the Carjat Gurung, as a number of authors have written? [33] Only twenty years ago, when a Carjat left for a journey, he was accustomed to give his baggage to a Solahjat to carry and to pay him for his service. This custom has now disappeared.[68] I have seen a rich Carjat traveller followed by one or two Solahjat porters, but this did not imply any idea of servitude. The porter had agreed to accompany the Carjat because he had nothing else to do in his fields and he could thus earn a few rupees. I have seen the same thing happen between wealthy Solahjat and porters from the same group of clans. I have observed Carjat who left to exchange cereals for salt in the valley of the Kali Gandaki: they themselves carried the load of cereals. The Solahjat often work in the Carjat fields, but we have seen already that this is for economic reasons. In general, the Carjat have more lands than the Solahjat. Those who help in cultivation receive a payment which is the same for a Carjat, a Solahjat or even an Untouchable. When we looked at the *nogar*, the village association for doing agricultural work co-operatively, it was stressed that it did not matter which Gurungs took part as there was no social discrimination. It is the same in the building of houses by an association of inhabitants or in the game called *dhakuri*. Finally, no professional specialisation

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[33] Cf. *Nepalese Chronicles*, VANSITTART, MORRIS, etc. *loc. cit.*

distinguishes the Carjat from the Solahjat. A Gurung can be a landowner, a day labourer, carpenter, priest or soldier. If he is rich or knowledgeable, he can take part in the council of village notables and help in matters of justice.

All this leads one to think that, nowadays, there is nothing to show that the Solahjat are the servants of the Carjat. Yet old tradition has long wished that it might be thus. An exceptional Carjat still affirms that this tradition is well-founded.

In recent years, numerous conflicts have broken out between the two groups of clans. During the second part of the nineteenth century, the prime minister of Nepal was called to judge if the Solahjat were inferior in status to the Carjat, after the publication at Benares of a book written by Sikarnath (1854). In a long document, in which he supported his argument with facts presented in several Nepalese chronicles, Jang Bahadur replied in the affirmative, specifying that the difference of status existing between Carjat and Solahjat was perfectly justified [34].

In 1908, the headman of the village of Dangsing, a Carjat, brought out a pamphlet in which he affirmed also that the Solahjat were the servants of the Carjat. This publication unleashed great agitation in Gurung territory and legal proceedings were brought against the author. As far as I know, no judgment has yet been given. In 1956, Sher Bahadur, a well educated young Carjat, brought out a small collection of chronicles "to help to draw up the History of the Gurungs" [35]. But these chronicles were all more or less similar to those which I cited at the beginning of this chapter (in particular to Legend II and Legend III). He did not criticise them or express any opinion. His pamphlet was interpreted as a new affirmation of the inferior status of the Solahjat. A large part of the Gurung population, Solahjat and Carjat, rose up against this publication. Thus, for at least a century, the tradition wishing to establish a strict hierarchy between Carjat and Solahjat has been argued and a large number of Gurungs have refused to admit that it was well founded.

The following are several anecdotes showing the feelings when I undertook my investigation on the status of the Carjat and the Solahjat in 1958.

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[34] I have not been able to consult the original documents.

[35] SHER BAHADUR GURUNG, *op. cit.*

- At Ghandrung, I had a good Carjat informant in the person of the principal headman of this large agglomeration. He was related to the family of my friend Chandra Bahadur. He refused at first to reply to our questions: "I have nothing to say on the Carjat and Solahjat. You cannot write on this subject since there is no difference between these two groups. They have the same rights and are equal". Later, during long conversations, Chandra Bahadur explained to the informant that my aim was not to take sides for or against the Carjat or the Solahjat, but to bring together the facts so as to enable me to describe the actual structure of Gurung society. After several visits, he agreed to give me some information, while repeating that it was of no use to my study.

- Then with my census of Mohoriya, Chandra Bahadur (Carjat), whose family lived in the village, categorically refused to ask each of the members of Solahjat families which clan they belonged to for he suspected that on hearing that question, "the Solahjat would think that I intended to separate them from the Carjat and affirm their inferior status". I was able later to verify the accuracy of his remark. While it was easy for me to obtain information among the Carjat, to whom the family of Chandra Bahadur belongs, it was only by indirect observation that I was able to get information on the Solahjat.

- The evening before I left Mohoriya for my return to the Siklis region, a large farewell dinner was given me in the granary where I had lived. A village man, in the name of the *krōh* who was ill at the time, addressed a few words to me. He asked me not to take sides on the question of discrimination between Carjat and Solahjat. "The Gurungs are only one group. To say that one is the servant of the other is a lie and contrary to the reality". These words received the approval of all the men present, Carjat as well as Solahjat.

- While at Siklis, a very old village of more than 600 houses, I caused an incredible agitation among the population when discussing with a group of inhabitants the history of the Gurungs, and in particular the roles of the Carjat and Solahjat in it. Groups of 30 to 40 men gathered here and there in the village. I learnt from Chandra Bahadur that they thought that I had been sent by the Government of Nepal to collect information with a view to legal cases in progress on the question. The

situation was redressed thanks to the deftness of Chandra Bahadur who explained at length the purpose of my questions. The Carjat and Solahjat villagers helped me hereafter with much good will. An old Solahjat woman possessed an ancient manuscript chronicle. The notables of the village went to find her so that she could lend them the document. "The manuscript has been lost", she told them. In this same village of Siklis, I had been recommended to an old *pucu* priest famous for his knowledge in all the west of the Gurung territory. He replied with great openness to my questions. "It is a certain fact", he said to me one day, "That there are Carjat and Solahjat. I myself am a Solahjat. This discrimination has been created by the Brahmins and the people of the south to divide the Gurungs and to give them an inferior status in Nepalese society". This opinion reflects the general tendency of the Gurungs to criticise the Brahmins as champions of a caste society in which they are accorded the highest status. But, though it is probable that the Brahmins and the people coming from the south, who have become masters of Nepal, have endeavoured to give an inferior status to the highland populations such as the Gurungs, they have not had to create this division of the Gurung population entirely. We will return to this.

To conclude, the Solahjat are not the servants of the Carjat. They have exactly the same rights as the latter. (I am not speaking here of the rules of marriage.) All the Carjat, or nearly all, recognise this in all good faith. One may therefore wonder that such a controversy divides the two clan groups. I believe that the real motive for dissension between Carjat and Solahjat is economic. The Carjat are, in general, well off or rich, the Solahjat poor or less fortunate. The Carjat own a large portion of the land while the fields of the Solahjat are small. At Ghandrung, the struggle has burst out openly. A Carjat, Dir Bahadur, has become the champion of the poor Solahjat peasants. He had brought several legal cases in their name for land, according to him illegally acquired by the rich Carjat, to be distributed among the Solahjat. The latter are all landowners, but they are small landowners and their agricultural exploitation is often in deficit. They must therefore work on account for the richer landowners, namely the majority of the Carjat, so as to be able to balance their budget, especially in the regions where few men join foreign armies. The Gurung does not accept ill fortune with resignation. He recriminates and wishes to assert his rights. He complains that the Nepalese government has not for a long time been interested in his lot

and does not give him the same rights and advantages as the inhabitants of the large central valleys. In the same way, he is no longer ready to accept that certain villagers possess a lot of land while others are in need. It is naturally difficult to affirm that there has been a change in attitude on the part of the Gurungs, in the absence of points of comparison. The least that one can say is that new factors have intervened since the beginning of the 20th century and that they have changed the attitude of the Gurungs.

A large number of Gurungs have served in the Indian or British army. They are educated. When travelling, they have observed the lands which they have crossed. Being very interested in politics, they have read the papers describing the social struggles which are occupying people at this time in Asia. One must not forget either that the political situation in Nepal has changed profoundly since the revolution of 1950 which has restored all authority to the King while opening an era of parliamentary monarchy. The first legislative elections took place in February 1959 [69]. It is necessary also to stress the important role of the military mercenaries which has allowed the gap which separated the Carjat from the Solahjat to close to a certain extent. During his military career, the soldier is promoted to higher ranks as a result of his ability. A Solahjat has as many chances as a Carjat to become a Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer. Consequently, during the ten or twenty years which he serves in the army, a Gurung accustoms himself to the idea that, whatever his status in the traditional Gurung hierarchy, it is he alone who climbs the rungs of the military hierarchy.

What have been the effects of this situation on Gurung society? Let us say immediately that to be a soldier, and above all to be a soldier for fifteen years at least, and to become a Non-Commissioned Officer or an Officer, gives prestige to an inhabitant of the village. Even when they are no longer in the army, the old soldiers keep the respect for an ex-Non-Commissioned Officer or ex-Officer, which they had for him in the army. When a villager of Mohoriya speaks of Chandra Bahadur, my "liaison officer", he calls him the "youngest son of a Captain", his father having been an Officer in the British Army. If a Gurung speaks to the latter, he calls him "Captain Saheb" (*Sāheb*, master, Mr., in Nepali, is very rarely used in Gurung territory, and only when one speaks to a person whom one respects very much for his high social position, but in

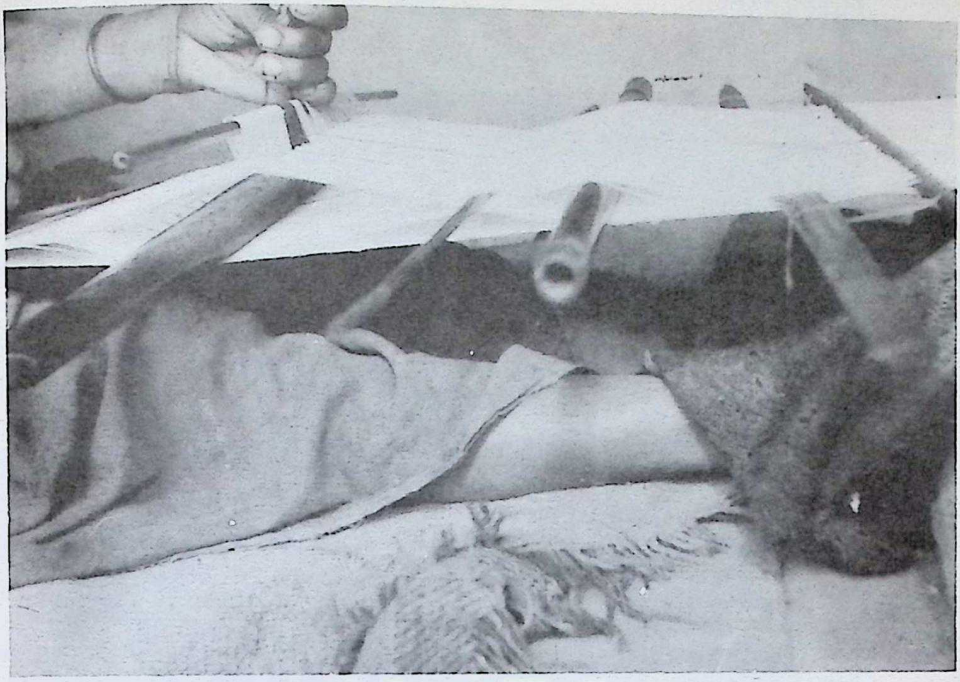
the army this is the way of addressing an officer. The Gurungs generally called me "Saheb").

Although the majority of the village headmen are Carjat, the Solahjat actively participate in the administration of village affairs. Lack of hard evidence, prevents us from saying that this is a new state of affairs. But one fact seems certain: the majority of the members of the village Council are chosen from among old soldiers and above all from among old Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers, both Carjat and Solahjat (cf. p. 202-3). Those who have commanded in the army continue to exercise their authority in the village, whether Carjat or Solahjat, thanks to the prestige that the education and rank acquired in the army gives him.

Furthermore, mercenary soldiering allows the Gurung, and particularly the Solahjat, to grow rich, especially if he is promoted to Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer. The savings which he can make from his wages gives the Solahjat the means to buy lands, the source of wealth in Gurung territory, and of raising himself to an equal economic level to that of the wealthy Carjat. According to what has been said previously, there is no doubt that the Carjat had, at a certain period, a right to the land which was not given to the Solahjat. Nowadays, this right no longer favours the Carjat since all the cultivatable lands have been appropriated and cultivated. Certainly, this right has given to the Carjat a large portion of the land, but if he can find a seller, a Solahjat who has saved when he was a Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer can acquire them and become a large landowner like a Carjat. Thus, mercenary soldiering has created a situation in reality which tends to limit the privileges of the Carjat.

F. - CONCLUSION.

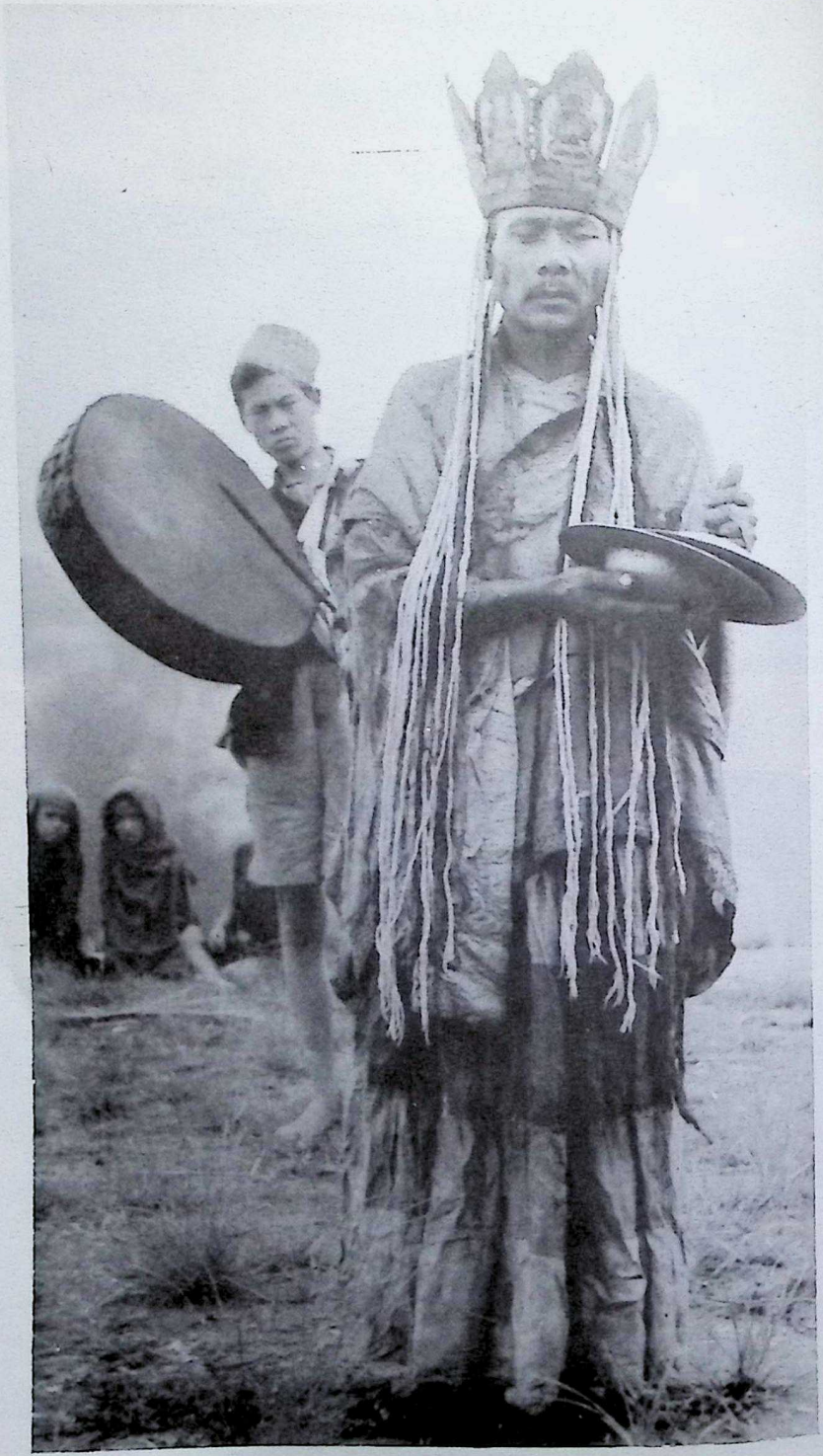
Although they now refuse to give the Carjat clans a superior status to those of the Solahjat, the Gurungs recognise that it has not always been thus, but they add that the Carjat-Solahjat distinction did not appear until after the conquest of the Gurung territory by the princes from the south. I think that this latter hypothesis has to be corrected. Before the Nepalo-Indian influence made itself felt, certain Gurungs could be distinguished from the mass of the population by their superior



33. Loom for weaving *nañi* (a warp)

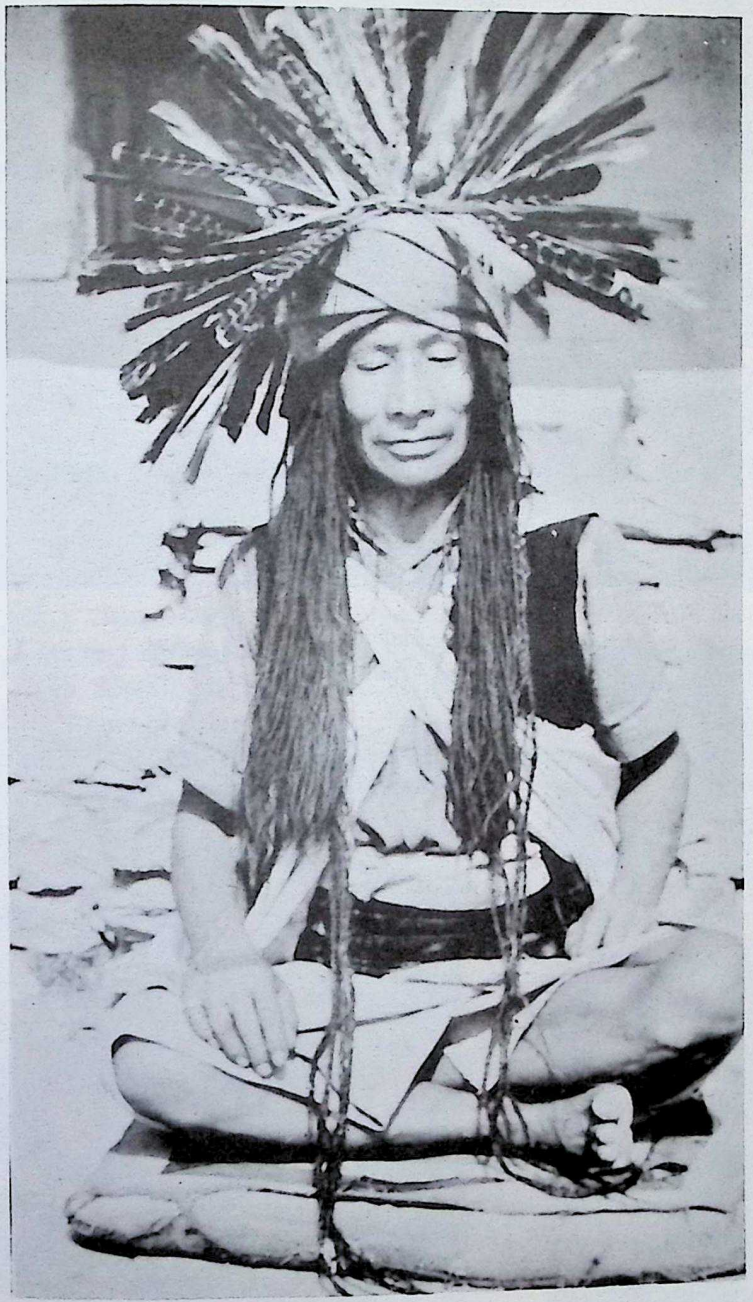
34. Small boys wearing woollen rain capes (*labru*).

Klihbrī priest



Pucu priest

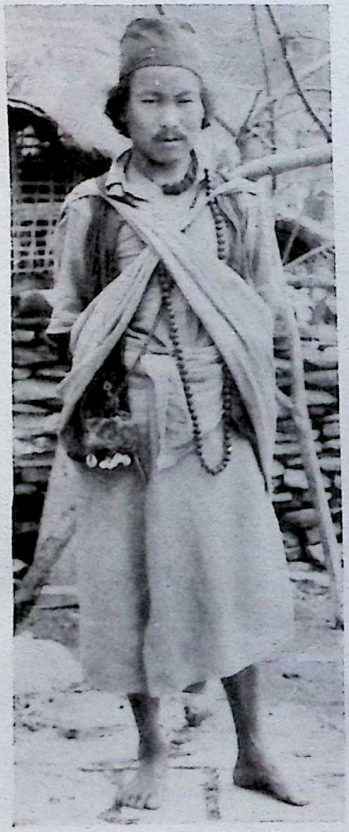
PLATE XIX

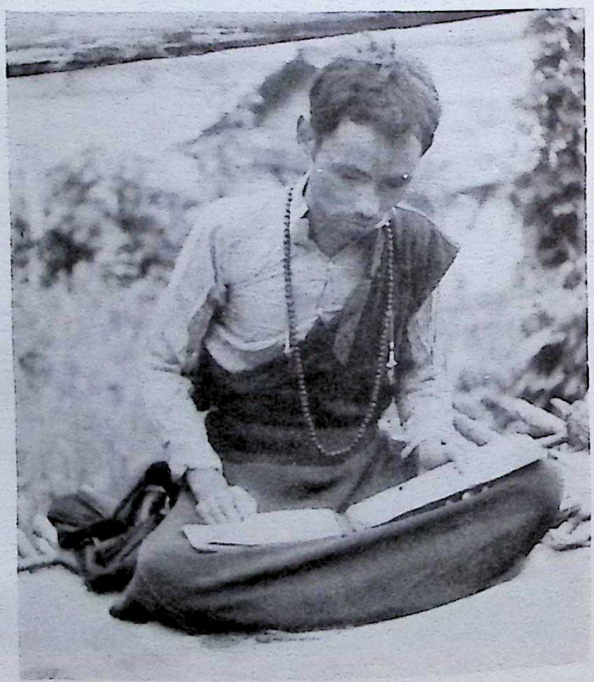


36.

Priests

37. Brahmin
38. *Dhame*





39. Lama

offices. The *ghale* clan were the kings, the *kon* clan, the administrators of the kings, the *lama* clan, the most prestigious priests. I do not speak of the *plon* clan for I have not been able to discover what office characterised them, but I think they could be included with the other three clans if the rules of marriage connecting the four clans are taken into account.

It would seem that the creation of the Carjat-Solahjat distinction is born from the fusion of two systems, that of the ancient Gurung tribal type of society, and that of an Indian type society brought by the new masters of the country. This fusion of the tribal and Indian has accentuated the distinction between the two levels upper and lower, and isolated the upper level. Even today, the Gurung marriage rules are evidence, the Carjat clans obeying strict rules which do not allow them to bring in foreign elements. In contrast, the Solahjat marriage rules are more flexible and these clans absorb the non-Gurung elements. Most assuredly, the Carjat framework of four clans broke up; important secondary clans exist besides the *ghale*, *kon*, *lama* and *plon* clans. But this is nothing compared to the profusion of Solahjat clans.

In adopting a Hindu model, the Carjat have imposed on the Solahjat a new division of society, based not on a functional difference, but on a hierarchical difference. [See APPENDIX J for another account of the history of the Gurungs.]

CHAPTER VI

THE LOCAL DESCENT GROUP

Within a clan, the Gurungs distinguish a varying number of lineages having a common ancestor. The expression *tah-mai* signifies the "men of the *tah*", "men of the local descent group". A certain number of the names of lineages are followed by the suffix *gi*, thus *ten-gi*, *pan-gi*, *mi-gi*, *sican-gi*. The majority of the names of lineages of the *kon* are followed by a suffix *rõ*, *rõh*, *kro*, *gro*: *com-rõ*, *hoj-ro*, *maj-rõ*, *nai-kro*, *mlo-gro*, etc. In the histories told by the *pucu*, one often finds these same suffixes *rõ* and *krõ* in the names of persons such as: *pa-chae-rõ*, *waj-krõ*. Maybe one should compare these suffixes with the word *krõ* or *krõh* meaning "headman of the village", which would tend to confirm the tradition which stressed that the members of the *kon* clan were for a long time the administrators of the *ghale* kings.[70]

In the course of the centuries, each clan has broken itself into lineages but the Gurungs do not possess (in the west of the Gurung territory at least) genealogies showing how this segmentation occurred. The Gurungs do not seem to attach any importance to it. It is therefore not possible to distinguish between the different levels of segmentation and consequently to reconstruct the historical formation of the lineages. This would not be possible to attempt unless one made a systematic list of all the names and localisation of the lineages which are said to belong to the same clan.

The lineage does not form a group. Some members of the same lineage live in villages often very far apart from each other and have no contact. In contrast, in any particular village, the members of the same lineage form a unit, the "local descent group".

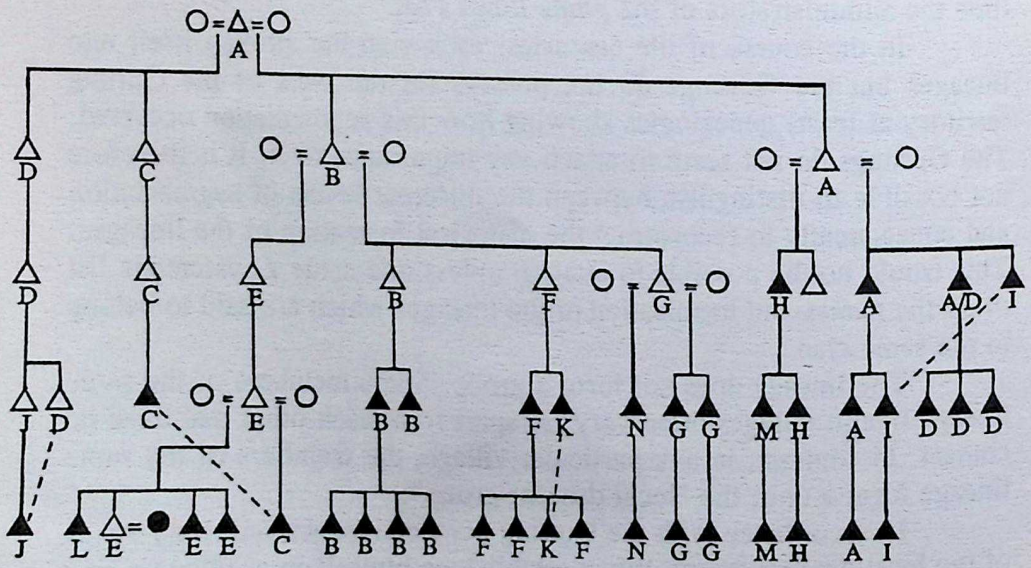
In accordance with the Gurung perspective, we will only speak of the local descent group. When establishing himself in a village a man becomes the starting point of a new local descent group. Sometimes he

keeps the name of the group from which he separated in addition to that of his clan.

A. - THE GROUP IN THE VILLAGE.

The clan being exogamous, *a fortiori* the local descent group is exogamous. As we have indicated above, the group is patrilineal. Residence is patrilocal: in general, a son of a man of a local descent group settles, after his marriage, in the village of his father. Sometimes a man may go to live in his wife's village when her father adopts him because he has no son. This only rarely happens.

A village is formed of a greater or smaller number of local descent groups. Each group, especially those of the Carjat clans, tend to live together within the village. The example which follows shows how the local lineage group *mi-gi-rō* (*kon* clan) of Mohoriya is formed (cf. fig. 6, p. 47).



▲ persons living in 1958 --- adoption
The letters refer to the houses marked in figure 6.

Figure 17 - Genealogical table of a local descent group.

The first inhabitant of Mohoriya settled on the site of house A. He had four sons; the last inherited his house. The other three constructed their houses near to that of their father (B, C, D). At the third generation, we have ten houses in place of the four of the second. One of the sons living in house B had four sons. The eldest son by his second wife lived with him. The three other sons built houses E, F, G, (E was only one house at this time). Thus, we see the formation of a second group of houses round house B. The youngest son of the first inhabitant who lived in house A had five sons. The two by his first wife went to clear the land to the north of the village and built house H there. The younger son died before long without having had a child. The two elder of the three sons which he had by his second wife stayed with their father in house A. The youngest built a house partitioning that of his ancestors, house I.

At the fourth generation, we find fifteen houses. The eldest branch who lived in house D separated, one son built J while the second stayed in the ancestral home D. Before dying, he adopted the son of his brother who still lives in house J. His house being empty, it was the second son of the founder's youngest son, living with his eldest brother in house A, who bought it and is living there still. The family living in C died out after the fourth generation, but before his death the head of the house adopted the youngest son of an agnate in house E and gave him his house. Two of the sons of the builder of house B each had two sons. House B is enlarged and has another floor, the elder grandson lives on the first floor, the younger on the ground floor, the two households being in fact independent. House K is built beside house F. Finally, house G is enlarged and two separate dwellings made under the same roof on the ground floor. The man who lives in house H has two sons. The elder built a house beside that of his father (house M) and the younger lives in house H. The man living at house A has two sons; the elder lives in the ancestral home, house A, while the younger was adopted by his agnatic uncle living in house I, and moved in with the latter. Thus, during the fourth generation the houses have doubled, enlarging the group of dwellings of the third generation.

During the fifth generation, little had yet changed by 1958, for the sons of several families had not left their parental homes and the division of property had not yet taken place. However, it is necessary to note the construction of house L by the eldest son of house E. This last

house is enlarged and heightened, the family of the second son living on the ground floor while the third and fourth sons live on the first floor. The fifth lives in house C where he was adopted. Among the four sons of the head of house F, the third has been adopted by his agnatic uncle living in house K. During the fifth generation, the number of houses has thus grown to 17 [71].

One can make several remarks. The houses belonging to the lineage tend to remain concentrated by enlarging the old dwellings or by adding new buildings to them. However the example of houses H and M shows that the children are free to settle themselves in another part of the village, if they wish to. Often the ancestral home is inherited by the eldest son, but this is not the rule. The case of houses J, L, and M shows this clearly. Unless the children are very attached to their paternal home, a considerable freedom is left to them to settle themselves where they like when they become independent from their family. An independent feeling, combined with a respect for custom, is a striking character trait of the Gurungs, and we will often find it.

In general, in the same village, there is a greater number of local descent groups belonging to the Solahjat than to the Carjat. (There are also more Solahjat inhabitants than Carjat). The number of families belonging to the same group varies. In general, the group that has been established longer has the larger number of families belonging to it.

The most important group numerically is not always that which has the predominant role in the conduct of village affairs. It is here that the distinction between Carjat and Solahjat intervenes. In general, the headman of the village is a member of a Carjat descent group, of the group containing the greatest number of families among the Carjat groups. Moreover, it seems that, in many Gurung villages, there may be one Carjat descent group which clearly includes a larger number of families than any other single Carjat lineage. Mohoriya is an extreme example on this respect. Of the 27 Carjat houses, 17 belong to the same group, the other groups only comprising one or two families. At Kõta, a third of the six hundred families living in the village are part of the same Carjat descent group.

One is thus encouraged to introduce the idea of the dominant local descent group. The dominant local descent group is Carjat. It is the most numerous Carjat descent group, and it owns the majority of the lands of the local descent groups of the village (we say, to simplify, that

it is the richest). From this group the village headman is chosen. This definition is founded on the facts observed in the villages of the valley of the Modi. That the dominant group is Carjat should not astonish us after what has been said about the clan hierarchy and the distinction between Carjat and Solahjat.

Furthermore, it is possible that the group that appears today to be the most dominant has become, in certain cases, the most numerous and most powerful because it was the Carjat group that was established longest. What we know of the origin of the *plon* of Kōta tends to prove the hypothesis that the headman of the village may have been originally chosen from among the members of the Carjat local descent group which was the most numerous, the richest and most powerful.

As for the fact that the dominant group is the richest, two hypotheses can be advanced, hypotheses which furthermore complement each other. The first we have already suggested: the headman of the village was originally chosen from among the members of the richest Carjat descent group. The second proceeds from this, that one of the members of the dominant group is headman of the village. It is true that during the last sixty years or so, a certain number of village headmen, in the Modi Valley for example, have registered a number of pieces of uncultivated lands in their villages in their own names (it is the headman of the village who grants these lands to the new inhabitants). Afterwards these lands have been given to certain members of their descent group, thus preventing the other inhabitants of the village from taking them.

Note that it could be that the Nepalese administration may have only confirmed an ancient privilege by giving to the headman of the village the right to distribute the lands. If this hypothesis proves to be correct, it would enable us to say that the dominant local descent group has been, for a long time, the group who had a right over the land.

B. - RELATIONS WITHIN THE GROUP.

All the kin in a local descent group are united by agnatic links since they all descend from a common ancestor who has been the point of departure for the group since his settlement in the village. A Gurung knows more or less the five preceding generations in his genealogy,

which is sufficient to establish his day to day relations with the other members of his local descent group [72]. We will show later that old age plays a certain part in the knowledge of kinship.

No member of the descent group has the duty of representing the group in the village. During the village assemblies, each head of a family joins in discussions and represents the interests of his own family. In the choice of members of the village council, the fact that he belongs to this or that local group does not play a determining role (cf. p. 202). All the groups are not represented on this council and often one group may have several representatives there.

In a great many cases, one of the heads of family has a predominant influence within the local group. He can owe his authority to his great age, to the high rank that he had been promoted to in the army, to his ability to reconcile differences, to his wealth, or to his office as headman of the village. He exercises his influence on many occasions. To a certain extent, he plays the role of adviser of the lineage. One asks his advice before deciding on a marriage or on organising a ceremony for the end of mourning (*pae*). He is asked to arbitrate when a dispute breaks out within the lineage. The dispute may put members of the same family on opposite sides: the wife demands a divorce which her husband refuses; all the sons being adult want their father to make a first partial partition of the lands so that they can each start an independent family from that of their parents and their father does not agree to partition, etc. The dispute can set two families against each other; one family fails to pay back money it has borrowed from another in the time agreed; one family cultivates a field which belongs to another family and tries to appropriate it, etc.

It can happen that the decision of the member of the descent group who arbitrates in the dispute is not accepted. The parties then go to the headman of the village to judge the differences, but this does not happen often. The families of a local group do not like to settle their disputes in public. They try not to show their rivalries or their quarrels in front of the families of other lineages. On such occasions, the local descent group shows how it is united and how the families composing it are jointly responsible despite the differences which divide certain amongst them.

Here is an example which illustrates this characteristic:

- A dispute breaks out within a wealthy local descent group. Family A has inherited an extremely steep field covered with brambles, but they had not yet registered it and were not cultivating it for the time being as they had sufficient fields to work. Another family B makes several terraces in this field and plants rice there. The first family tells the second that they did not have the right to cultivate land which did not belong to them and orders them not to plant rice there again. Family B answers evasively and the following year cultivates the fields anew which family A did not yet want to develop. Family B then lets it be known that they have registered the land where they had made the terraces in their name (which makes them officially the owners). The same family B is also in dispute with family A and another family of the same local descent group on the subject of the boundaries of several small fields. Because of the gravity of the situation, all the heads of families in the group meet together, decide to go to the disputed lands, then measure them and judge the value of each. Returning to the village, the heads of the houses who were not involved propose a plan for partition which takes into account the rights of each of the parties, then they submit this to the latter. I had left the village which was the scene of this dispute before it was completely settled, but, when I left, an agreement was in sight. At no time did the villagers belonging to other local descent groups discuss this dispute in public. When I asked them about this subject, they replied briefly and evasively, "This is none of our business; it occurs in all local descent groups". The heads of households of the local group in which the dispute had broken out met inside the house of one of them, the rest of the village keeping apart from the long discussions which developed there. Families A and B never broke off relations. At most one could note a certain coolness in their daily contacts.

The solidarity which prevails between families of the same local group is expressed on many other occasions: during the construction of a house after a fire, during a period of scarcity, when the season for harvesting rice and millet arrives, etc. The unity of the local descent group is particularly marked during two religious ceremonies. One is celebrated at the death of one of the members of the group and we will study this later (cf. p. 281 *sq.*). The other generally takes place once a year on a variable date:

- The local descent group organises a picnic *so-kai* (*so-ba* (?): to separate, to divide; *kai*: food) in the fields near to the village. A sheep or a goat is sacrificed to the god or spirit who is the protector of the local lineage. No particular name is given to this. The ceremony is celebrated more or less like a Hindu *pūjā*. The person who officiates is generally the oldest member of the local descent group. Water and rice are offered to the god on a little altar made of two or three stones decorated for the occasion. Rice mixed with the blood of the sacrificed animal is placed in front of the persons present, the liver of the goat or sheep which has been sacrificed is extracted. One looks to see if it gives a good or bad omen for the fortunes of the local group. If the principal lobe of the liver is marked on the underside with a short groove, it is a good sign. The god is favourable. In contrast, if the groove is long, it is a bad sign.

There is nothing to enable us to be more exact about whether this cult, which has a certain Hindu character, existed or not in a similar or different form before it may have been affected by Indian influence, but it shows the religious unity of the local descent group.

C. - RELATIONS BETWEEN GROUPS IN DIFFERENT LOCALITIES.

These relations are mainly determined by geographical proximity, and agnatic and affinal relationships. Only those local groups living in a very limited geographical area are more or less regularly in contact. We can see the exact extent of this area when studying marriage (cf. p. 235). If a local descent group in a village is detached from another local group living in a distant settlement, the first group usually loses all contact with the second. In contrast, if they live in two neighbouring villages, the two local descent groups maintain their agnatic relationships. But the relations between two local groups united by agnatic ties are much less tight and affectionate than those between two local groups united by links of affinity. These latter, however, reinforce the former if the two agnatic groups have kin by alliance in the same group.

If a Gurung goes to a village where his relatives by marriage live, he is not only received with marked affection by the families of his

relatives, but is also asked to visit other families of his relatives' local descent group. As we will see, this trait is particularly marked among the Carjat for, often, several families in a local group have established alliances with the families of another group, over several generations. Travelling with a Carjat, it was occasionally decided that we spend the night in a village where affinal kin of my companion lived. Generally we couldn't leave the next day for my companion was invited to eat by all the families of the local descent group of his affinal kin and he could not respond to all these invitations in the space of one evening or even one day.

CHAPTER VII

THE VILLAGE: ITS ORGANISATION AND JUSTICE.

A. - ORGANISATION.

I. - Relics of an ancient organisation.

A *pucu* priest from Siklis told me the legend of the foundation of Siklis linked to the division of Gurung territory between several kings of the *ghale* clan.

"The ancestors who founded Siklis came from the north and crossed the high hills situated to the east of the four summits of the Annapurna range. In their journey towards Siklis, they established themselves for a time at Ol-proh then at Phal-proh (*proh*: mountain), lastly at Tohsya. A little after their establishment at Siklis, the *ghale* went to live at Kohl or Kohla [1]."

What is the history of these *ghale*?

"A woman was meditating near Sabuti-kyal-sa (*kyal*: king; *sa*: earth). One day she saw in a dream a lama monk and she was filled with a profound sexual contentment. She awoke pregnant and in time gave birth to a son, Pajo-karu-kleh (*kleh*: master). He became the king of the country where in the meantime other peoples from the north had arrived.

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[1] My informant had visited this site at 3,200 m. in height, a days journey to the north-east of Siklis. It is now covered by the forest. One finds the foundations of stone houses there.

He married and had several children. One of his grandsons went and established himself at Co-karu-hyul-sa (*hyul*: country) (which is to be found, according to my informant who had travelled in that region, near to Muktinath, on the northern slopes of the Annapurnas). Then he emigrated to near Braga to the south-east of Manangbhot. There, Kyal-bo-kham-ba (*kyal-bo*: king) who did not belong to the same family (?) as Pajo-karu-kleh, had become king. As a result, Kyal-bo-kham-ba went towards Sabje to the south-east of Braga. Then he went to Kohla. Later, the descendants of Pajo-karu-kleh again took power with King Kyal-bo-ruju. From that time, those kings, who had taken the name of *ghale* when they were still in the north of the Himalayas, conquered the lands on the southern slopes. Two brothers went towards the east, the one to the Gorkha region, the other to the Lamjung region at Ghalegaõ. The third established himself at Siklis."

These kingdoms disappeared at the time of the occupation of the country by the princes from the south. But little independent princedoms existed in several valleys inhabited by Gurungs. Thus the valley of the Modi was governed by two families: the one reigned at Ghandrung to the north of the valley, the other in the south-west and the north of the Barũdi Valley [2]. All these little states lost their independence during the second half of the 18th century during the reign of Prithvi Narayan. The administration of the country was given to the village headmen (*krõh*), the local representatives of the central power. The situation has remained the same since that time.

2. - The Village Headman.

The village headman is called *krõh* in Gurung, and *mukhya* in Nepali. We have seen that there may be several *krõh* in a village. In this case, each *krõh* independently represents the Government among the families who depend on him, and meets with the other headmen over problems which affect the general interest of the village.

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[2] I have visited the sites of two forts occupied by these kings. The foundations of stone and certain protective works are still visible (walls, ditches). These forts were situated on almost inaccessible promontories, controlling vast expanses.

How does one explain the fact that the same settlement can be run by several *krõh*? I have not found any written document and have not collected any direct information which would allow me to reply with certainty to this question. However, it seems to me that one can advance an explanation. Let us imagine a village led for several centuries by a member of a local descent group A. During the centuries the village grows. Descent group A divides and each sub-group moves off into a new "quarter" of the settlement in way of development. Two examples support this explanation:

- Ghandrung is a large settlement of nearly 600 households, divided into seven villages or, more exactly, seven "quarters". The oldest is To-ro, where one still finds the house of the first *krõh* of Ghandrung who was a *lamechane* (or *plon*). Nowadays, Ghandrung is run by seven *krõh*, all except one belonging to the founding lineage *plon* of To-ro. Ten years ago, the seven *krõh* were still *plon*, but one among them was dismissed for his incompetence and replaced by a *kon*.

- Siklis is another large settlement of more than 400 households. We have said (cf. p. 171) that, according to tradition, the *kon* threw out the *ghale* and took over the running of village affairs. Nowadays there are 84 *kon* houses and of the ten *krõh* of Siklis, six are *kon* and belong to the same local descent group. Among the other four, there are two *plon* and one *lama*.

The office of *krõh* is hereditary, it passes from father to eldest son. This is not a rigid rule and may be modified: if the *krõh* does not have a son, he can adopt a son of one of his brothers or agnates. But he must consult the village before taking this decision. He is free to adopt an infant, who automatically inherits his land but not his office. He needs the permission of the village for the office of *krõh* to pass to him. If the *krõh* shows himself incapable of guiding village affairs, he can be dismissed according to two different procedures. The majority of the inhabitants send a request stating the reasons to the Bara-hakim, the head of the province appointed by the central Government, to ask him to dismiss the *krõh*. The reasons given are: intellectual incapacity, dishonesty, physical incapacity due to illness, etc. The Bara-hakim approves or does not approve the request. The Provincial Government

can also directly decide to dismiss a *kroh* if he has committed a grave fault in the execution of the duty with which he has been entrusted.

For example:

- Before 1940, a dispute broke out between the *krõh* of Mohoriya and that of Dangsing. In this affair the *kroh* of Dangsing showed himself to be a man of bad faith, that of Mohoriya, incapable. They were both dismissed, the first by the direct action of the Bara-hakim, the second, at the request of the discontented village.

- Ten years ago, one of the seven *krõh* of Ghandrung, who belonged to the *plon* clan, was replaced by a *krõh* of the *kon* clan by demand of the inhabitants for whom he was responsible because he was incapable of handling their affairs.

Thus, the *krõh* can be dismissed from his office if he is incapable, and replaced by a man of his local descent group or another local group if the request of the village assembly is approved by the Provincial Government.

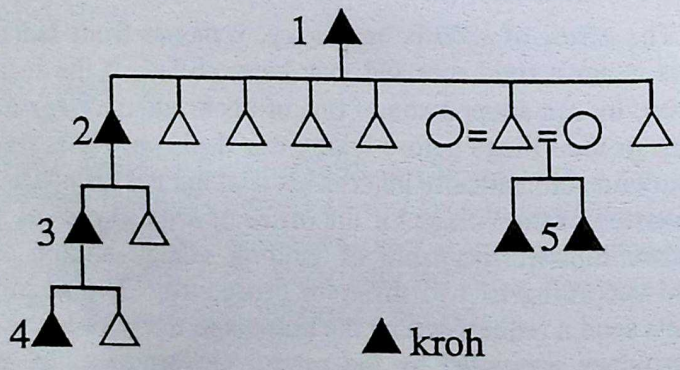

Figure 18 - Succession of the *krõh* at Mohoriya.

For four generations the office of the *krõh* had passed from father to eldest son. The fourth headman handled the affairs of the village badly. He was dismissed. Two of his agnates had struggled for several years to repossess the lands which he had allowed to be seized by the village of Dangsing, after a law-suit. Having succeeded in getting the first judgment annulled, these two men became *krõh* of the village of Mohoriya at the request of the community. They are brothers. The elder has a certain superiority, due to his order of birth, and is the "first" headman of the village. But legally, the two men have the same authority.[73]

a) *Clan of the* krõh

Almost all the heads of the village are Carjat. However, I know of two Solahjat *krõh*: the one, of the *klihbri* clan, in the province of Kaski no.3, the other in the province West no.4. The *kroh* mainly belong to the clans *kon* and *plon*. Village headmen of the *lama* clan are not very numerous either and, as far as I know, there is only one *ghale kroh*, that of Ghalegao (cf. chap. V and VI).

b) *Role of the* krõh.

- He is the representative of both central and provincial Government in the village. He administers Nepalese law in the community. He holds an up to date list of the landholdings of each house, and he goes to register the transfers of the land at the Adda (Provincial Government), so that legal ownership is given to the new acquirer and sees that the latter writes his name in the tax register for his new land. He gathers the yearly land-taxes from the village houses for which he is responsible, and takes them to the Adda. He collects the money paid by the villagers who cut trees in the government forests. He controls the financial aid given by the State for the management of the school. He decides if an offence should be tried by the traditional local justice or by the official government justice. Finally, he drafts the majority of the official documents concerning recognizances for debts, sales of land or animals, decisions concerning divorce, etc.

- The *krõh* enacts and applies the internal rules of the village. He fixes the calendar of feasts in conformity with tradition and the advice

given by the Nepalese astrological calendar. He decides in which forest the trees and the mountain bamboo (*mah*) can be cut. In certain cases, he must give permission for the trees to be cut down and he collects the dues paid to the village fund. He supervises this fund. He directs the collective work which must be done by the whole community: to repair the roads which have deteriorated, to weed out the grass which grows up in the walls which border the narrow lanes during the monsoon, to construct or repair a cistern, to build a meeting place, to prepare a local feast. He decides if it is necessary to organise a beat when a leopard, a bear, or bands of monkeys destroy the crops or attack the cattle. He rules on the local disputes which the parties concerned or he himself do not wish to take before the provincial court.

- He orders certain religious ceremonies, above all in a case of drought or when an epidemic decimates men or cattle.

- He permits a newcomer to establish himself in the village and gives him land to clear if there is any.

Where there are several *krõh* in the village, certain decisions which affect the whole community are taken by all the headmen together.

- The *krõh* administers village affairs with the support of two local bodies: the council (of notables) and the general assembly of the village.

3. - The Village Council.

Its members are chosen by the *krõh* from among those persons who are the most representative and the most capable in the village. At Mohoriya the Council is composed of men of age, clan and status as follows:

Aged 45 years N.C.O. retired, Solahjat
Aged 48 years N.C.O. retired, Carjat
Aged 52 years Captain retired, Carjat
Aged 74 years Solahjat

Aged 51 years Soldier retired, Carjat
Aged 48 years N.C.O. retired, Solahjat
Aged 50 years ex-soldier quit, Carjat
Aged 32 years Reserve N.C.O., Carjat
Aged 62 years Captain retired, Carjat
Aged 72 years Lieutenant retired, Carjat
Aged 51 years ex-soldier quit, Solahjat

The number of members in the Council is not fixed. In the same village it may vary according to the year. The Untouchables never participate in the running of the village but they may have to submit to its rules. Although there may have been seven Carjat and four Solahjat on the council, it is clear that the two groups of clans have the same rights of membership. The three principal clans in Mohoriya, *kon* (Carjat), *pun* and *yoj* (Solahjat) are represented thus: five *kon* of the *krōh* lineage, the dominant one in Mohoriya, two *kon* belonging to two other lineages, two *pun* of the same lineage and one *yoj* [also one *pahi*].

According to this example, we can conclude that the members of the Council are chosen as a result of several factors: certain of them are the rich villagers who possess much land; others have been well educated and have travelled a lot while serving in foreign armies, which allows them to speak in an authoritative manner. Except in three cases, the members of the Council who were soldier have already proved their ability in the army by becoming a Non-Commissioned Officer or an Officer. Certain are known for their honesty, their intelligence or their ability to counsel parties in dispute. In conclusion, the members are chosen with a view to the efficiency of the Council, for their qualities, and to equitably represent the various interests. The members of the Council meet in the house of the *krōh* when he summons them. The role of the Council consists mainly in giving rulings, with the headman of the village, on local disputes, and judging offences falling under the jurisdiction of the *krōh* (family quarrels, damage done to a house, thefts, etc.) This Council is above all a judicial assembly and a court of arbitration for the village. It also meets to prepare for general assemblies of the village and to give advice to the *krōh* on local affairs of lesser importance.

4. - The Village Assembly.

Each household is represented, almost always by the head of the house. If he is absent, which is often the case, or dead, his wife can replace him and join in the debate. Only the Gurungs are invited to the discussions.

The Assembly is convened by the *krōh*, generally three times a year. These meetings coincide with the period of feasts during which all the peasants are in the village. They meet either on the large terrace in front of the house of the *krōh* or around the main *cautara* of the village. In certain villages, such as Ghanpokhara, a large levelled terrace surrounded with stone tiers has been built for this. This assembly is often called by the Nepali word *kacuri*.

In the old stories told by the *pucu* priests, this assembly plays a large part in socio-religious life. The king convened it each time a grave crisis occurred, or when an important decision had to be taken, and an informal discussion took place between the prince and his subjects.

Nowadays, the Assembly meets for:

- Discussions with the headman of the village on the internal rules of the village and their application (construction of a school, the running of the latter, establishing the limits of zones of agriculture and grazing, etc.). The *krōh* also uses such occasions to let the people know about recent Government decisions.

- Decisions with the *krōh* over the exceptional religious ceremonies organised by all the village to stop a drought, an epidemic, or a natural catastrophe. For example, during my stay at Mohoriya, an epidemic struck the buffaloes in the village. Five died in the space of four days. The Assembly was convened. It decided to celebrate a *puja* to satisfy the gods and appease the evil spirits. A list of all buffalo owners was made and each put forward a sum fixed by the assembly to buy the animals necessary for the sacrifice.

5. - Katwal.

The *krōh* nominates a *katwal* [3]. It is he who makes the public announcements in the village when the *kroh* decides, for example, that a day is to be kept as a holiday. He carries the messages which the *kroh* sends to the other village headmen in the valley. He accompanies the *krōh* when he takes the taxes collected there to the Adda, and carries the pieces of silver.

He is normally chosen from among the *damai*, Untouchable Tailors. In Mohoriya, the *katwal* is paid at the rate of a *pathi* of cereal for each household in the village.[74]

6. - Prestations.

Each household gives a day's work free to the *krōh* to compensate him for the time which he spends managing village affairs. Ten years ago the payment was fixed at three free days, but the political and social changes which have shaken Nepal since the revolution have meant the reduction of this payment.

7. - Comments.

The general administrative and political organisation is the same in the Gurung country as in all Nepal. Thus, I have not dealt with it in this study. Nevertheless, I would like to note here that the contacts between the central Government and the villages have been very little developed until now. The village lives on its own, ignorant of all that happens in the capital of the country, and for its own part the latter is very badly informed about life in the high Gurung valleys. However, a certain effort has been made during the last eight years. Schools have been built. In 1959 the first legislative elections in the history of Nepal took place, elections in which the Gurungs were invited to participate [75].

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[3] F. BARTH notes the existence of the *katwal*; cf. *Indus and Swat Kohistan*, Oslo, 1956, p. 37.

The organisation of the village could be summarised in the following diagram.

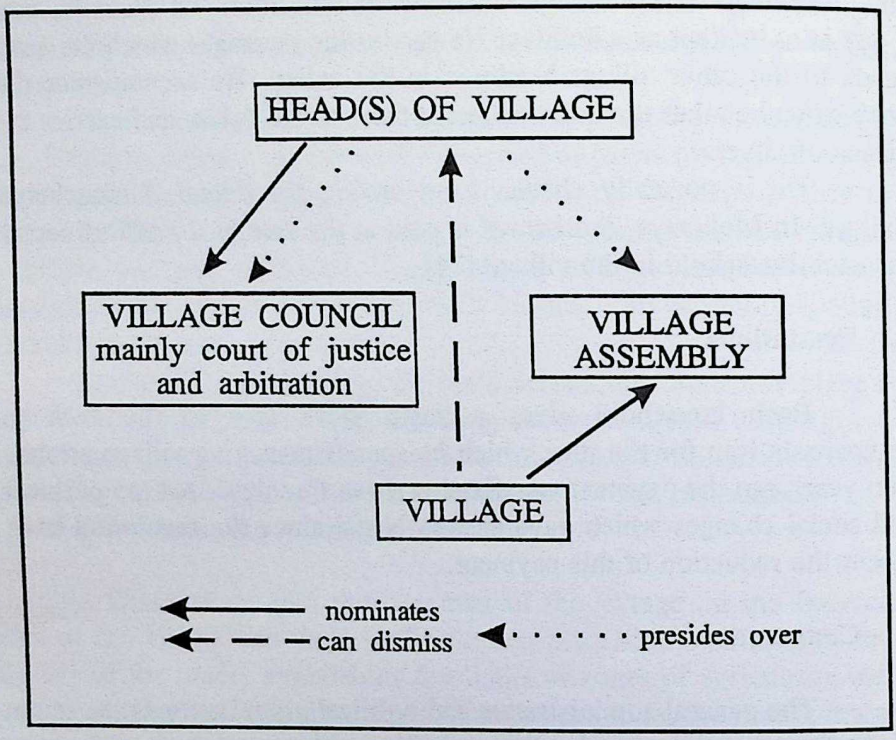

Figure 19 - The Organisation of the village.

At the base of the political organisation is the village, the community of households. A member of each household sits on the village Assembly which regulates local affairs of general interest. The village can dismiss the *krõh* if he is shown to be incapable of defending its interests. But the authority of the village is counterbalanced by that of the *krõh*. He is not elected by the village. His office is hereditary, which gives him authority, prestige and enables him to retain independence in relation to the villagers as long as he shows himself worthy of the office which he holds. It is he who presides at the village Assembly and ratifies its decisions. He is also the head of the Council which he nominates. This Council, representing the opinion of the village, is composed of

people instructed and respected by the community who at the same time advise the *krōh* and above all help him to administer justice.

The system is thus in balance. The headman of the village and the community of the inhabitants each has a voice in the public affairs of the village while, at the same time, retaining their independence in relation to each other. The Council plays a specialised role as a moderator and as tribunal of private rights.

B. - JUSTICE.

Although disputes occur very frequently among the Gurungs, they are most often minor and are settled quickly when they arise. Crimes such as theft and assault are very rare.

Before dealing with local traditional justice and official provincial justice, we shall see in what atmosphere conflicts or disputes break out and how they are dealt with, by briefly describing the aspects of three of them.

- It is 5 o'clock in the evening. The mistress of a house realises, on returning from the fields, that one of her chickens has disappeared. Neighbouring relatives tell her that they have seen the wife of an Untouchable prowling around the house in the afternoon. This woman has a reputation as a thief and the other lady rushes outside and waits in front the Untouchable's house. Not having caught the thief "hand in the sack" she does not accuse her directly as she wants to avoid making a scandal. "Someone stole my chicken, my poor chicken! (She speaks in Nepali as it is the house of an Untouchable Goldsmith). I have no hen to hatch my eggs. I will have no chicks. May the person who has stolen from me fall ill and be unhappy!", she cries out in a shrill voice. After twenty minutes of cursing, she returns home. The next morning, before leaving for the fields, she repeats the same scene. Then, nothing more is heard or spoken of it.

- One day, at about 6 o'clock in the evening, a dispute breaks out between the *pucu* priest and his neighbour. The priest is lazy and very fond of grain alcohol. He is poor. His neighbour, a woman of 62, is fairly rich. That evening, the *pucu*, a little the worse for drink, comes,

as usual, to ask, or rather beg, for something from his neighbour who, for one reason or another, refuses him. The priest answers her curtly. His neighbour takes offence and soon the man and woman are saying what is in their minds. "Lazy, alcoholic!", she cries. "Miserly, rude woman!", he shouts back. The next morning, the dispute revives for a few minutes and then dies away. Everything returns to normal.

- During the transplanting of rice, a dispute breaks out between two men. The previous evening, one of them had directed the water of an irrigation channel which was flooding the other's fields, towards his own fields. When the latter arrives the following morning with his day-labourers to transplant the rice, he cannot do so as his fields are not flooded. The dispute is not violent. The two men are intelligent, shrewd and inclined to moderation. The scene occurs on the terrace of a house. The men of neighbouring families join in the discussion and make the culprit aware of his offence. He will have to give a little grain to the other in compensation for the damage sustained. The affair is decided.

Disputes often break out in the evening on the return from the fields when the parties who have some cause for quarrelling come back to the village (the reason for the quarrel having become apparent during the day). The tone of voice suddenly rises, and with theatrical gestures, each sends the other to the devil; then the quarrel comes to an end shortly after and all is forgotten one or two days later.

One characteristic dominates all these disputes. Although the noise of the argument makes all the village aware of the conflict, no-one takes sides. The two people or the two households involved are not joined by any other villagers. One hears at home, often with smiles and jokes, about those who are in dispute. Gurung morality requires that the conflicts which do not start with an offence infringing the internal regulations of the village or the injunctions of Gurung society, should only involve the opposing parties themselves. But if the latter ask for arbitration by one or several other villagers of their choice, these never refuse and try to help to restore peace between the two families.

I. - Local Justice.

When an offence has been committed or when a dispute cannot be amicably resolved without the intervention of the *krōh*, he convenes his Council who then take the role of a tribunal. The meeting usually occurs on the gallery of the house of the *krōh*.

Common law offences which local justice has to decide are rare. Gurungs are not aggressive in character and respect the individual personality too much to make assaults against a rival. Theft is not common. During my stay among the Gurungs, I did not observe a single case. "Thefts are generally committed by Untouchables", informants said. The highland Gurung is a proud and very honest man. In the six months which I spent at Mohoriya my luggage and my equipment was spread out in the grain loft where I lived. Villagers often came to meet at my house when I had gone out. However, nothing disappeared from my lodgings. Without any doubt, the Gurung loathes theft. If a villager committed this offence, all the village would immediately be alerted, for all is known within the community. The culprit would be in a difficult situation: he would no longer have people's confidence. But the life of the individual is closely bound to that of the village community. The individual could not and would not want to live without it. This situation therefore forces him to avoid creating animosity and distrust around him by committing an offence condemned by society [76].

a) *Disputes*.

The most frequent disputes which have to be regulated by local justice are mainly caused by:

- the inability to repay a loan;
- damage caused in the fields by livestock;
- excessive usage of irrigation water for rice-fields;
- breaking the internal rules of the village;
- the division of inheritance, the break-up of a marriage (which we will study later).

- *The inability to repay*. - Rich families lend a large amount of money and grain to poor families at a reasonably high rate of interest. The debtors are very often unable to repay their debts at the date fixed.

The arbitration tribunal gives a further period to the debtor. Often, it orders him to pay when his son or brother returns from the army after three years absence, bringing back 1,000 or 1,500 rupees of savings. Or else, it decides that the land which has been given as security at the time of signing the contract must become the property of the creditor for the reimbursement of his loan.

- *Damage caused by livestock.* - During the time that the fields are cultivated, it can happen that buffaloes or cows leap over the enclosing walls and destroy the plants. When the damage has been discovered, the owner of the field and the owner of the animals which have caused the damage, accompanied by two neutral men chosen generally from among the members of the Council of the *kroh*, go to evaluate the loss. The quantity of cereals or potatoes which must be given in compensation by the owner of the animals is then fixed by the two witnesses or, if there is disagreement, by the headman of the village and his Council. This type of dispute is very frequent and is always decided very quickly without animosity.

- *Excessive use of irrigation water.* - This kind of dispute breaks out during the monsoon when the rice is transplanted. A villager deflects the water channel to lead it towards his fields when he does not have the right to do so. The resolution of such a dispute is generally very difficult. There is no precise system for the division of water, but merely a tacit agreement. Furthermore, it is very difficult to estimate the damage. The rice plants only temporarily suffer from the dryness and are not completely destroyed.

- *Breaking the internal rules of the village.* - In studying the political organisation of the village, reference has been made to the regulations decreed by the *krōh*. If a villager disobeys them, he must make amends to the village fund. In this case, there is no arbitration nor friendly arrangement. The *krōh* is the sole judge of the offences committed.

b) *The Tribunal and its authority.*

The Tribunal is formed by the *krõh* who presides and the Council nominated by the *krõh*. Except when it has to judge offences of common law or breaches of the internal rules of the village, the Tribunal plays an arbitrating role. Its decision can be appealed against. The parties can make an appeal to the official provincial jurisdiction. To make judgment, the *krõh* relies on the depositions of the parties, the exposition of the facts given by the witnesses and listens to the advice of the members of the Council. The authority of local justice is certain. The villagers generally prefer that their disputes should be amicably dealt with in the village with or without the intervention of the *kroh*. They know all the men who are consulted. They themselves are often connected to them through kinship. The *kroh* and his Council, since they live in the same village, are best placed to know the conditions in which the dispute has arisen, who are the protagonists, their characters, and their economic status. Furthermore, the costs of such a settlement are minimal. As we will see, this reason plays a determining role and often obliges the parties to accept the decision of local justice.

The judgments in matters of misdemeanour are accepted by the offender as, contrary to cases of arbitration, they always have the approval of the society which has traditionally fixed the rules. Refusing to accept the decision is to reject public opinion, to make oneself an outcast from the village community.

c) *Sanctions.*

The sanction is always decided by the *krõh*. There are two kinds of sanction:

- If the offence is small and if the offender is not a recidivist, the *krõh* gives him a lecture, showing him his error, advising him to act differently in future, explaining to him finally what will happen if he repeats the offence.

- If the offence is serious or if the offender is a recidivist, the *krõh* fixes a penalty or compensation in money or grain. If damages have been caused to a particular person, the offender must give

compensation. Thus, for a stolen chicken, the offender must give five or six rupees to the complainant.

If the rules of the village have not been respected, a fine, the level of which is often fixed by tradition, is given to the village fund.

Examples:

- The fine is 5 rupees if an owner does not drive his animals outside the limits set by the *krõh* for cultivated fields by the date fixed.
- If a household does not send one of its members to a collective work ordered by the *krõh*, it must pay one rupee a day.

At the beginning of the century, there were still corporal punishments. Beating was common. The offender was tied to a tree and received a certain number of strokes with a stick. This punishment was only inflicted when the offender was a recidivist and the offence serious.

2. - Provincial or official justice.

We will not study the organisation of this justice here but only the role which it plays in Gurung society.

Official justice courts are all found outside Gurung territory, at the provincial seats of Government which are situated in the central plains of Nepal, such as Pokhara and Nowakot. The interested parties must therefore go two or three days walk from their village to bring an action. The judges and other employees of official justice are Chetris, Brahmins, Newars, but never Gurungs. Their ignorance of the life of the highland populations does not put them in a good position to judge the conflicts of these peoples with an understanding of the cause. Finally, one must not forget that the Gurungs are for the Chetris, Brahmins and others, peoples of an inferior caste. The relations between judges and litigants are thus marked with a certain constraint to the detriment of the latter.

Official justice has to judge two kinds of case:

- In the application of Nepalese law, criminal cases are the preserve of official justice. The *krõh* must hand over the culprits to the

governmental police in the area where the crime had been committed. Crimes are extremely rare. In the valley of the Modi, they could only remember one murder. It took place at Dangsing in 1950-51 (?). At that time, a national revolution restored the authority of the King of Nepal and opened the way to the democratisation of the country. Social troubles broke out a little everywhere. At Dangsing, a village situated to the south of Mohoriya, a rich man well known throughout the valley, an ex-Lieutenant of the Nepalese Army, was killed by several men of his village. The motive is not clearly understood. It seems that he had failed to restrain the bitterness of poor people in respect of a rich man for whom they had to work. One of the murderers was arrested in the Lamjung region and put in prison by governmental justice. The others are still on the run. This murder could be called a political crime and recorded as just one in an exceptional series of events which shook all of Nepal for nearly a year [77]. Even though the Gurung is a warrior, war is for him a chase, a game for men. As he loves to hunt in the mountains, so he likes war. His taste for this is not a result of his aggressiveness. He is not aggressive. He is not violent in his love for a woman, in jealousy, or in rivalry.

- When the arbitration of local justice is not accepted, the parties can have recourse to provincial justice. The procedure is long and costly. Only rich peasants engage in this. It is also this jurisdiction which decides differences between two villages and between *krōh* and villagers.

Examples:

- In a neighbouring village to Mohoriya, a rich *krōh* was accused by the inhabitants of having registered lands which were as yet uncultivated, so that he could become the owner. These lands were the property of the village and ought to have been given to those who were poor and needy. An action was started at the provincial court. It lasted 18 years. The *krōh* spent 16,000 to 17,000 rupees there (a million francs in 1958), which represents an enormous sum when one realises that a day's wage is 1.5 to 2 rupees. He had to borrow between times 8,000 rupees from a family to continue the case, which he finally won. To repay his debt he had to give to his creditor rice fields worth 6,500 rupees.

- A dispute broke out between the villages of Mohoriya and Dangsing. The *krōh* of this village accused that of Mohoriya of not having declared to the Adda the village rice fields so as not to pay tax. The *krōh* of Dangsing won the case and the *krōh* of Mohoriya was dismissed. He was not replaced and the territory of Mohoriya was placed under the dependence of the *krōh* of Dangsing. The heads of two Carjat houses in Mohoriya reopened the case and demonstrated the inaccuracy of the facts. By means of great expense, they won the second case. The lands of Mohoriya were returned and the village became independent again. The two defenders became *krōh* of Mohoriya.[78]

Official justice in fact only judges disputes where the most important landed interests are the cause. These conflicts are occasionally exaggerated by a rivalry, between poor and rich, or between two large landowners. The sums which must be paid in bribes are so high that small landowners do not dare to bring an action in front of provincial justice and prefer to accept the arbitration of local justice which, even if it is not satisfactory, has the advantage of not ruining them. As for economic and political organisation, so for judicial organisation, the Gurung village forms an almost closed unit, only very superficially dependent on the rest of the country and on the provincial and central Government.

CHAPTER VIII

BIRTH - CHILDHOOD - ADOLESCENCE

In the pages which follow, we will observe the young male or female Gurung from birth to marriage, an essential stage in life because, as we will see later, a Gurung does not acquire full status until marriage.

A. - BIRTH

No particular care is taken during pregnancy [79]. Two or three months before the birth the husband stops having sexual intercourse with his wife. The women say that if you can feel the head of the foetus on the right, the child will be a boy, and if it is on the left it will be a girl. At the birth, the baby's body is washed and anointed with *ghī* or mustard oil. It is good to put a drop of this oil into each eye in order to give the child "keen sight". The umbilical cord is cut with a sickle or a *khukri* (Nepalese knife). If the nose or the cranium is of abnormal proportion the shape is corrected by pressing it with the hands. If the child or the mother dies at the moment of birth, the lama is sometimes sent for, in order to carry out the appropriate Buddhist rites. As during her periods, the woman is not impure after the birth and takes up her normal life again immediately, in the bosom of the family. During the first six months, the baby is only given milk; then maize flour, rice flour, honey, salt and *ghi* are added to its diet. The child stops breast feeding only

when the mother has another baby. No religious rite accompanies the birth. If the family is well off they can ask a brahmin to make a horoscope for the child according to the day and hour of its birth.[cf. supplementary note 9]

For the last two or three generations, the name of the child has been fixed by consulting a Nepali-Indian horoscopic calendar which can be bought in the bazaars. If the child is born at a certain time, his name must begin with *c*, *j*, etc. The name is always different from that of his parents or grandparents. It is nowadays chosen from among Nepalese names (Sham Sher, Chandra Singh, Chandra Bahadur..) although up to the middle of the last century all the names were, properly speaking, Gurung.

B. - INFANCY.

Young children are treated without regard to their sex. Men and women take them in their arms and play with them during their moments of leisure, mostly early in the morning and in the evening when they return from the fields. During the night small children sleep against their mother, the man sleeping on his own. The first six or seven years of childhood are spent more with their mother than with their father. The man never takes his children with him when he goes to work in the fields. On fine days little ones often play on the gallery of the house with nothing on. Until the age of six or seven the boys wear a shirt and the girls a dress. They play together, girls following the groups of boys and amusing themselves with games which they organise and naughty tricks they get up to. The dynamic element of the group stems from the boys; they don't refuse to play with the girls but make them join in their games, to the great delight of the latter.

After six or seven years, the two sexes begin to separate themselves, although there is no direct order from the adults tending to create this situation. The girl starts wearing a dress which comes to just above her calf. Then, in the years which follow, she dresses more and more like her mother; a piece of cloth covering her hips and legs, bodice, wide belt and head scarf. The boy, in contrast, continues to wear his shirt until he is eight or nine when he dresses like his father; *khas*, *rhaṅ*, etc. From when children are five or six, adults make remarks on their appearance: "Do not hold up your dress like that, hide your

stomach". The child develops the habit of not showing his sex in the presence of an adult, but when they are amongst themselves the boys especially exhibit themselves with a lot of pride. Drawings which I got the boys of eight or nine to do show an accurate knowledge of both sexes, which they expressed freely. The girls, in contrast, refused more often to draw a man or a woman, especially if the boys were with them; they drew only decorative patterns. At this age the two sexes play separately. The girls begin to have responsibility in the life of the household. They live in strict contact with their mother who models them into their female role. They go to fetch water at the spring in small pitchers. They learn to work in the orchards and to grind flour with the hand mill. Often they delouse their mothers and carry young brothers and sisters on their backs. The boys, in contrast, become more and more independent of adults, always mixing happily with groups of gossiping men. They almost never work and move throughout the village in lively groups. They amuse themselves with passion and guile, giving the adults a lot of trouble. Their games are quite different from those of the girls whom they ignore. Thus when the latter are initiating themselves into adult social life, the boys form an independent group which is completely irresponsible. Playing, running, climbing, they develop the body whilst at the same time cultivating a sense of personal initiative. If one asks a mother, during the daytime: "Where is your boy?", she replies, "I don't know... in the village... up to mischief!". In contrast, she can say precisely: "My daughter is here or there."

C. - ADOLESCENCE.

Up to the age of 13 or 14, the child is called *kolo*, and *cyõ kolo* (*cyõ*: small) during its first years. The moment he becomes a *phrẽ*, an adolescent or a young person, the boy or girl no longer has the same life and their meetings are few. A boy is absent from the village almost all day. He watches the animals, he goes to fetch the wood from the forest, and he works with the adult men in the fields. He only returns to the house to eat. Often he does not sleep at home at night and stays with other boys of his age in a neighbouring house. A girl is fully occupied with household chores. The mother goes to the fields during the day and the daughter works in the house and looks after the smaller children. At

night she always sleeps at home, after amusing herself with a few friends.

At 15 or 16 years, boys and girls are fully conscious of their sex and identify almost always with adults of the same sex. When in the evening the young adolescents meet together in a house to pass the time in a lively way, the girls take part from the shadows. One hears their glass bracelets jangling together and their laughter muffled in their hands or their head scarfs. When they are asked to sing, they are bashful in front of the circle of boys who are apt to embarrass them with their slightly crude pleasantries.

At the nightly gatherings, the girls are between 15 and 19 years, boys between 17 and 21 years. Those who are younger do not like to join in these adolescent meetings. Boys from 14 to 16 will go and amuse themselves together in another house. A lot of girls will marry when they are only 15 to 18, but this is never the case with a boy. Whether or not young girls mature physically earlier than young men, it is true that the society prepares them earlier for adult life. Their responsibilities, their knowledge of domestic life, their physical maturity makes an impression on young boys of 15 or 16. They feel embarrassed and avoid any dealings with them. On the contrary the older adolescents look for their company. They like to be with girls when they are in a group, and it is the same for the girls, even though contact is rare between individual adolescents. A girl will never go alone to mix with a group of boys and, conversely, it is unusual for a boy to amuse himself alone with a group of girls. When the two groups do mix the conversation is lively, the repartee fast, and the girls give the boys as good as they get. In the songs of the evening, improvisation has a very important place. A duet is often sung by two youngsters, a boy singing two verses to a girl who answers him.

Whilst studying the *nogar* (cf. p. 119) we saw how adolescents of both sexes would mix together in a work group. Throughout the day, they are side by side in the fields, singing, and often making crude jokes. The boys will sometimes make sexual gestures which are quite clear. The presence of the group makes the boy more outgoing and the girl a little skittish. But in public and during the day, one never sees a boy and girl walking alone together and flirting.

If a young couple have sexual intercourse at night, they do it secretly, in a field on the edge of the village. The two adolescents feel

ashamed if they are discovered and they are afraid that young people will make fun of them and make jokes on the subject. As far as the adults are concerned no one seriously blames the boy. The girl would be severely reprimanded by her parents [80]. The other villagers would tease her but would not criticise her conduct. To avoid such mistakes, young girls are carefully watched during the evenings by their mother, especially in well-off Carjat families. At Mohoriya, it was very unusual if one of these young girls stayed at my house after 10 or 11 at night. In contrast, the other young girls would often be singing with the boys until two or three o'clock in the morning. However, they always went back to sleep at their homes, though the young men slept in my loft or in a neighbouring house, not returning to their paternal house until the early hours of the day to start their morning's work. These gatherings in the evening thus allow adolescents to meet each other, to get to know each other better, and to make romantic attachments which are rarely followed by the sexual act (the boy wants this but the girl avoids it for fear of being found out).

There are no taboos concerning menstruation. A mother helps her daughter with her first period, but without making it a serious crisis for the young girl. Because between the age of ten and sixteen she has had few contacts with boys, when she is of marriageable age she is a little afraid to mix with other friends in a group of young people. Very often she will excuse herself and slip furtively into the shadows. For the moment she will say nothing. Suddenly she will join in the chorus singing, and then actively participate in the gathering. It is necessary for her to break a kind of vague barrier which separates the sexes and puts her in an inferior position in relation to a boy. Her entrance must go unnoticed even though it may not be disapproved of, indeed quite the opposite. It is not an enjoyable evening if both sexes are not there together. Most frequently a group of young men will go and ask the girls to come and join them so that they can spend the evening together. Naturally they refuse. The boys go back to the house where they have said they will be waiting. A quarter or half an hour later the girls will arrive, slipping in with the sound of bracelets and rustling skirts. Moreover, all the songs in the evening are composed to be sung by a group of male and female voices.

Dances which are purely Gurung in character are only done by the men. In the Nepalo-Indian style dances which take place more and

more in modern festivals, the young men dance dressed up as women. Only two sorts of dance are done by girls, one even by a very young girl. But these dances have a ritual character (cf. pp. 321, 327). Each only takes place once a year, on the terrace of the *krõh* and is performed less and less [81].

It would seem that the young adolescent girl's reticence is due to the growing influence of Nepalo-Indian civilisation. Thus when I asked a young male Gurung about the *ro-dhĩ* (the name given to the custom of evening meetings of adolescents, popular amongst the Gurungs) he remarked: "Nowadays, the *ro-dhĩ* is less flourishing than before, and it is better like this. It is not good that young girls and boys should meet at night. Other Nepalese peoples never do it and criticise our custom, saying that we have loose morals." I often heard remarks of this sort. It is certain that Gurung soldiers will have observed women when they were in India or Kathmandu. Their behaviour is that of persons of a superior Nepalese caste, Brahmins, Chetris, and the Gurung would like to be thought of as a man of high caste. He therefore tries to imitate the manners of the peoples of Nepalo-Indian culture.

In general, sexual relations are rare before marriage. In fact, from the age of 19, physically fit young men will join up in foreign armies and leave the village. However, it is likely that they will try to court a girl when they return for six month's leave. As far as young girls are concerned, they marry young, between 15 and 18 years, and therefore the period when they could have sexual relations before marriage is quite short. Premarital sexual intercourse between an engaged couple is also quite unusual, particularly if they are Carjat, as the young man will often have to find a wife outside his village (cf. p. 230 *sq.*). Thus, he can only meet his fiancé once or twice before the wedding day.

D. - THE DEPARTURE OF THE ADOLESCENT FOR THE ARMY.

From a young age the small boy has got used to the idea that one day he will be a soldier like his father. There was no small boy aged two or three years who did not know how to "make salaam", that is to make a British military salute, when an adult asks him to do it. A young boy

is proud to wear a soldier's belt or the green wool beret of the Gurkha gunners of the Indian army. When his father or a man from the village comes on leave, the child will listen enraptured to the stories of military life which are told to him. He hears talk of planes, boats, cars, and large towns full of well dressed people who earn a lot of money. The man on leave brings back books and weekly papers full of photos representing that life which he knows nothing of. They also talk to him of the bad side of military life, the discipline, the dangers, but these are quickly forgotten. Without doubt, the mercenary on leave is the best recruiting sergeant for the Gurkha regiments.

At 19 years, a Gurung has self confidence, is independent and looks forward without apprehension to his approaching departure for the army. He has acquired these qualities of assurance and independence from his youth. From a young age, he has had heavy responsibilities. His father is a soldier abroad and he must therefore help his mother in the work in the fields, fetch wood from the forest, carry heavy burdens at harvesting, and look after the animals. The adolescents are conscious of the role they play in the modern Gurung village. The boys will often say "no" to an important person who asks them to do something but has earlier refused to give that which was due to them.

What are the motives which push the young Gurungs into choosing a military career? When I asked the question directly, "Why are you going to become a soldier abroad?", the most frequent answers were as follows (the order is arbitrary):

- A soldier in India or Malaya is well paid.
- It is a chance to travel a lot. Thus one can see the modern world.
- There is not enough land to feed everybody. I have several brothers. If one or two amongst us become soldiers those who stay in the village can live a bit more easily [1] [82].

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[1] Without statistical information allowing one to study the population increase of the Gurungs during the last centuries, it is not possible to verify the hypothesis that overpopulation has forced the Gurungs to serve under princes or foreign governments to relieve the situation. From the material I have been able to collect, one fact seems certain: in the present situation, the upper valley of the Modi, for example, can hardly feed all the population which has, without doubt, increased a lot during the last 80 years.

- One sees the soldiers and hears them talk so much about their life, that one is tempted to follow our elders and become soldiers ourselves.

The last three responses need no further comment and certainly represent the real motives which push the young men into joining up. The first response needs some elaboration. The economic motive is essential. In fact, the Gurungs could have joined up in even greater numbers in the Nepalese Army which also recruits troops. Kathmandu resembles an Indian town of average importance, with its cars, palaces, cinemas, etc. Moreover, to live in Kathmandu, is to live in Nepal, in your own country, with people who speak the same language. However, there is a big difference separating the foreign armies from the national army. In the former, the pay is much better, and after 15 years of service there is a pension paid on retirement. The Nepalese Army does not pay well and does not give pensions to former soldiers. To try to ensure Nepalese Army recruitment, a law has been enacted; it does not permit anyone living within the two districts around Kathmandu to join a foreign army. However, I know of a number of cases of soldiers living in these areas who have enrolled in India, and have given a false name for the village of their birth in order to be accepted by foreign troops. The Nepalese Army does not suffer from this as it is recruiting more and more from the people of the lowlands who are not generally engaged by India or Britain.

In addition to the four motives which have been directly expressed by my informants, there are also, to my mind, other reasons which are perhaps of secondary importance, but which I was able to pick up from conversations with soldiers on leave or retired. They like military life because it is the life of a group. We have already said that the desire to live alone is an abnormal attitude for a Gurung. They laugh at anyone who travels without a companion. In the army, they sleep in dormitories, they train by squads or companies, and they amuse themselves by playing football or cards together.

This rapid increase in population explains, to a certain degree, the huge departure of soldiers registered during the last twenty years.

Remember also that to be a soldier gives them prestige. Thanks to money earned, they can buy watches, trousers, sunglasses, and cheap goods, which are admired in the village. The man who has been a soldier, particularly if he has become a Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer, goes up in the village hierarchy and collaborates in the management of village affairs.

Compared with the laborious mountain life, the life of a garrisoned soldier, as many soldiers know, is a paradise of rest and easy living. The hours of service are limited and clearly fixed. Thus, while work in the fields is dirty, that of the army is not so. When his daily duty is finished, the soldier can wash himself, dress up in good clothes and go and amuse himself.

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE

Almost all the households are monogamous, one man only marrying one woman at a time. A man is very sincerely attached to his wife and does not want to share his affection between two women. For her part, the woman will not tolerate cohabitation with another woman if she has some children. If the husband wants to take another wife, the first will leave the household and divorce him. I have noted several cases of polygyny, but they are very rare, even though perfectly well accepted by the society. All the examples that I knew showed that the first wife was barren. The husband, still being attached to his wife, asked her if she would accept a second wife who could give him children, and above all sons. The husband was generally 45-50 when he took this decision. At Mohoriya, one man was bigamous. He was 72 years; his first wife was 65 and his second 45. The latter had had two boys which she had given birth to when she was 30 and 32 years.

Usually, in polygynous households, the two wives are not actual sisters. However there are exceptions:

Example:

- At Ghandrung lives a former Captain of the Indian Army who is bigamous. He married a girl from a village situated to the south of Mohoriya. Not having had a child by this woman, he married her younger sister who gave him several children. But in the meantime, the father of the two sisters adopted the Captain who by this inherited the property of his father-in-law. The first wife went to live in her father's house while the younger stayed at Ghandrung. The Captain lives

alternately with one and then the other. Moreover the first wife has had children since.

In polygynous households, the husband is usually a rich villager who can feed two wives. In poor families the wife who cannot have a child is sent back to her own family and a divorce is declared. The man then marries a second woman. It seems therefore that polygyny only happens when the first wife is sterile and if the economic situation allows for it.

Concubinage does not exist in the proper sense.

There are men and women who are not married, widowed or divorced, who live together without having been united in a marriage ceremony because it could not take place, one of the partners being Carjat and the other Solahjat. This type of union differs from a legal marriage only in the absence of a ceremony. We will see later in detail that these two types of union are not distinguished in any other way and are generally accepted by the society.

Successive marriages and divorce are very common among the Gurungs. The couple is free to take its own decisions and their conflicts do not interest the community in which they live. Adultery or divorce is the affair only of the parties concerned and no appreciable social pressure is brought to bear.

Gurungs have a very marked preference for monogamy. The ease of divorce allows a woman to leave her husband if the latter neglects her and thus recover her independence.

A. - PRELIMINARY PHASES OF A MARRIAGE.

The negotiations concerning the possible marriage of a man and a woman are conducted by the parents of the two interested parties. Although the situation may have changed considerably during the last few years, leaving more freedom of choice to the engaged couple, the wishes of the parents strongly influence the decisions of the children. Negotiations take two different forms according to whether the future couple live in the same village or not. Distinguishing the two cases:

- If the future couple live in the same village [1], they know each other well before marriage because they are part of the same generation and have had numerous occasions to find themselves in contact during childhood and adolescence. Often an affection springs up between two young people in the village and one day the boy will let his parents know that he wants to marry such and such a girl. If the parents are favourable to such a union, they enter into relations with the family of the young person. In order to do this, they use a mutual friend of both families and preferably an agnate of the father. They want the go-between to be a person of some prestige, well known for his wisdom and good advice. His task is to look into the horoscope of the young girl and that of the boy and to find out if the girl is free and willing and if her parents are agreeable to the marriage. If all the advice and the comparison of the horoscopes are favourable, the match is decided. There may be a meeting of a formal kind bringing together the parents of the engaged couple, but this is not necessary. The family of the boy can send a present in silver of a symbolic value, a rupee to mark the engagement to celebrate the marriage (*casucangrā* [*chhajub chyoba*]). The father of the boy also sends a rupee (*pica* [*mahi*]) to the father of the girl as a sign of friendship (*a-gu*).

- If the future couple live in two different villages, it is very rare for the boy to know the girl before the negotiations begin. Nevertheless, it sometimes happens that a young man or woman going to help at a ceremony to end mourning (*pae*) or to accompany a betrothed or a young married girl to a neighbouring village, will meet their future wife or future husband on that occasion. Usually, it is the women who are the instigators of a marriage. They are in the habit of going and spending ten or twelve days with their parents in a neighbouring settlement at least once in the year. There they talk about the boys of marriageable age in their village, of their in-laws, and make enquiries about the marriageable girls in their natal village. Nothing definite is then decided. They question and are questioned in general terms. When the women return to their husband's village, they discuss what they have found out and their impressions, and suggest possible unions. These conversations are an

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[1] For reasons which we will see later, (cf. pp. 230, 233), this happens more often when the future couple are Solahjat than when they are Carjat.

important part of female gossip. At this stage, the men are in ignorance of what is being plotted among their wives. A soldier son on leave hurries things up. The father will be given a run down of the situation and the possibility of marriage with such and such a girl. If he looks favourably upon the marriage of his son, he will send a go-between to the young girl's parents. The role of this mediator is the same, in this case, as in that of a marriage within the same village. If the two families are agreeable to the union of their children, the future husband will go and visit the family of his future wife so that the young couple can meet each other before accepting the choice made by their respective parents. Thus, even in this type of marriage, they give the interested parties a chance to get to know each other a little and to give their consent.

Note in passing the role played, in the second case, by the women during visits which they make to their own family and which consist in finding, in their local descent group, a girl who could marry a boy in the local descent group of their husband. This role anticipates a tendency, especially amongst the Carjat, for matrilateral marriage which we will define later on (cf. p. 236).

In the negotiations, the local priests play the role of advisor. In fact, it is necessary to consult the horoscopes of the couple and to see whether they agree and will allow the union. The families who are well off and are strongly influenced by Hinduism call a brahmin to see whether a marriage is possible, following the method of Indian horoscopes. Usually, they go to a Buddhist lama, to a *pucu* or a *klihbrt*. The lama sometimes follows the rules of Tibetan horoscopes in order to give his opinion but more often he uses the system of the Gurung horoscope (influenced by that of Tibet) which is common to the *pucu* and to the *klihbrt*. Without going into details of this system which we will study with religion, let us say that the life of each individual is influenced by the sign of the year in which he was born, the same sign recurring periodically every twelve years. If one of the two young people is in an unlucky year, it is preferable to put off the marriage for a year. If the signs under which the couple find themselves do not agree, the marriage is discouraged, as it would be an unhappy one.

The brahmin alone is capable of precisely fixing the day of the marriage because the Gurung horoscope does not have any rules on this subject. However, he is rarely consulted (it is expensive to ask a brahmin

to come from the lowlands) and the local priests fix a date for the ceremony with the families concerned, trying to interpret as far as possible the little Nepali-Indian horoscope calendars which are found in some houses in the village. In fact the date chosen is often that which is the most convenient for the families.

B. - RULES OF MARRIAGE.

I. - Endogamy and Exogamy.

Let us recall briefly the rules touching endogamy and exogamy.

The Gurung population is endogamous. "The Gurungs can only marry between themselves", my informants frequently said. In fact, we have seen that this is not always the case. The two clan groups of the Carjat and the Solahjat are respectively endogamous. The clan is exogamous. Among the Carjat, the clans *ghale* and *kon* on the one part, and *lama* and *plon* on the other part, form two exogamous groups.

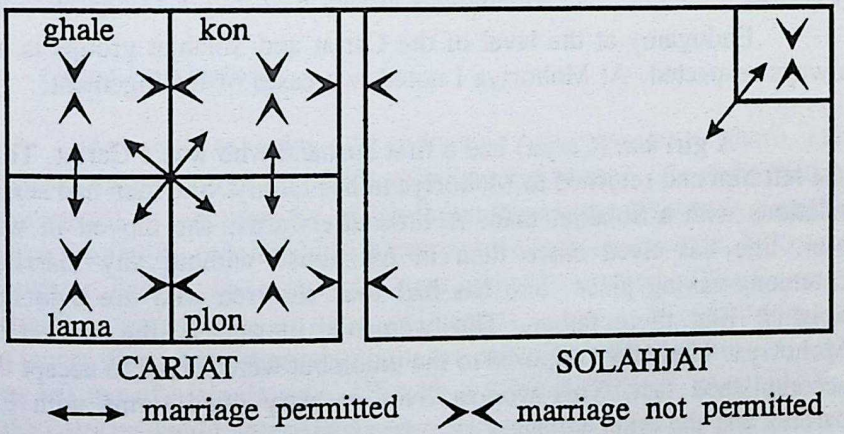

Figure 20 - Endogamy and Exogamy.

How far are these rules respected? The ideal does not always correspond to the fact. The Gurung population, we have said, forms an endogamous group. However, numerous cases of intermarriage with

other races have occurred. The chronicles tell of daughters of the *ghale* kings marrying princes who came from India. Certain Gurung faces clearly show the mixture of Mongoloid and Aryan blood. Mohoriya is a village where such a mingling of races has taken place, and I have to say that it is an exception in the Modi Valley. Puns (Magars) have settled in the village and have married Gurung girls. Now they are called Gurungs and are not distinguished from "true" Gurungs. A Gharti family (former slaves) has started to contract marriages with the Gurungs. But these marriages generally have the following characteristics:

- the new element usually belongs to a Mongoloid group.
- this man marries among the Solahjat.
- he only marries when he has adopted Gurung traditions and forgotten his own. [83]

I have not encountered a single case of a breach of the rule of clan exogamy [2]. When asked what would happen if this should occur, my informants unanimously affirmed that a couple who were both from the same clan would have to leave the village, losing all their rights to live in the community. According to them, such a case had never occurred.

Endogamy at the level of the Carjat and Solahjat groups is not always respected. At Mohoriya I noted two cases of infringement:

- A girl *kon* (Carjat) had a first husband who was a Carjat. Then she left him and returned to Mohoriya to her family. She then had sexual relations with a Solahjat man. A little afterwards, she moved in with him. She has lived since then in his house without any marriage ceremony taking place. She has had four children who are evidently Solahjat like their father. The woman's lineage is the richest in Mohoriya. They were opposed to the union but were forced to accept the accomplished fact. This woman lives on very good terms with her parents and the other villagers.

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[2] Two histories told by the *pucu* and *klihbrī* priests describe such a case of infraction (cf. pp. 350, 359)

We will meet this attitude again where a man and a woman are not prevented from having their conjugal happiness as they wish, especially after a first marriage. The second union arises more from an agreement between two individuals than between two families or local descent groups. Naturally, parents do their utmost to prevent an irregular union from happening, but accept it if their children are resolute in their decision. The village community stays outside the conflict and does not condemn the union.

It seems that a Carjat woman can easily be adopted by a Solahjat family. In contrast, a Solahjat wife finds her position very difficult in a Carjat family. The constraint which prevails is not created by the men but by the women of the family, who think of the young wife as an inferior. The situation can be improved if the couple can live independently.

Exogamy between the two couples of Carjat clans is sometimes violated with the second marriage in the case of successive or polygynous unions. But the majority or irregular marriages result from confusion about clan nomenclature. It is difficult to place certain clans into the Carjat classification. Marriages therefore take place without being able to say whether they infringe the rule, because, in these cases, the rules of marriage have not been clearly established.

2. - Other constraints.

As well as rules on endogamy and exogamy, there exist restrictions touching kin, which complete the former. These restrictions correspond to sanctions for which the guilty are most severely punished when the family relationships are very close (son and mother, father and daughter, brother and sister who have sexual intercourse). The Gurung's attitude to such unions is, in my opinion, akin to ours in regard to a case of incest. For a Gurung such unions are monstrous. My informants could not tell me of a single case. "If such a thing happened", they told me, "the culprits would immediately be reported to the Nepalese police as the law ordains." However, in one of the histories told by the *pucu* priests, a case of incest is described:

"A brother and sister fell in love with one another and had sexual relations but they immediately realised the enormity of their sin and

secretly left the village, knowing that they would be hunted as monsters if their liaison became public. They went to live alone in the high mountains, in the middle of a wood. One day whilst she was weaving, the sister fell on her back from high on a vertical, rocky, wall. When her brother returned to the house and found that his companion was dead, he threw himself from high on the mountain to rejoin her in death. The brother and sister became two wandering spirits; those of 'two human beings who were eaten up by the mountains', who now disturb men's peace."

Marriage is impossible in the category of parallel kin. The restriction regarding parallel kin on the paternal side can be seen as resulting from clan exogamy since, on that side, classificatory fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters, are of the same clan. The rule touching parallel kin on the maternal side derives from the ban on marriage among the descendants of two sisters. A Gurung explained this ban by saying: "I cannot marry the daughter of my mother's sister because I call my mother's sister 'mother' and her daughter is my sister".

Marriage between cross kin is allowed but can only take place in the same generation. In particular, one cannot marry the daughter of a sister, a niece. One has often interpreted the ban on cross marriage as a reflection of exogamy in the maternal line. Nothing permits us to conclude this here. But it is necessary to point out that if the marriage of the niece was allowed the prestations at funerals could not be done (cf. p. 289). I have not seen a case of such a marriage. My informants have indicated to me that such unions were exceptional and never happen when its the first marriage. Finally, note that the Gurungs are not happy about the exchange of sisters between two men. I do not have a single example of this [84].

3. - Preferential marriage.

A Gurung can marry either his cross cousin on his father's side, or his cross cousin on his mother's side. In fact, when he does marry a cross cousin, he generally chooses one from his mother's side. No clearly expressed rule forces a Gurung to marry his cousin. It seems that this marriage is not considered as an ideal union. Nevertheless, between

two cousins, a Gurung prefers the daughter of his mother's brother to that of his father's sister. In the Mohoriya genealogies, I have noted that cases of a marriage with a paternal cross cousin were rare while marriages with the other cousin were frequent [85]. But if we consider the totality of marriages shown in the genealogies, we can see that in quite a significant number of cases, the man has married a woman who has no kinship link with him. It is important to recognise hereafter that marriages with a woman other than a cross cousin are much more frequent among the Solahjat than the Carjat. The latter have a tendency to favour matrilateral marriage, that is to say the union of a man with his mother's brother's daughter.

C. - LOCATION OF MARRIAGE. MATRILATERAL MARRIAGE.

I. - Statistics and comments.

In studying the cases of 138 girls born in Mohoriya or married there, we have established the following statistics:

Mohoriya

Solahjat women of M. married at M.	36
Carjat women of M. married at M.	3
Cases of intermarriage between Sol.-Car. of women of M. at M. (1 Car.,2 Sol.)	3
Total:	**42**

Kõta (Ghandrung)

Solahjat women of Kõta married at M.	25
Carjat women of Kõta married at M.	19
Total:	**44**

Women of Mohoriya married at Kōta	10

Dangsing region (Tūhsī, Garibō, Birethāti, Sabe).

Solahjat women	9
Carjat women	11
Total:	**20**
Women of Mohoriya married in this region	7

Region between the Barūdi and Pathi rivers.

Solahjat women	3
Carjat women	2
Total:	**5**
Women of Mohoriya married in this region	6

Region of the eastern slopes of the Upper Modi.

Solahjat women	4
Carjat women	4
Total:	**8**
Women of Mohoriya married in this region (Solahjat)	12

Region to the south of the Upper Modi.

Solahjat women	7
Carjat women	9
Total:	**16**
Women of Mohoriya married in this area	6

Women coming from urban areas further afield.

1 from Gorkha (Carjat), 1 from Baglung (Carjat), 1 from Beni (Solahjat)

Total: 3

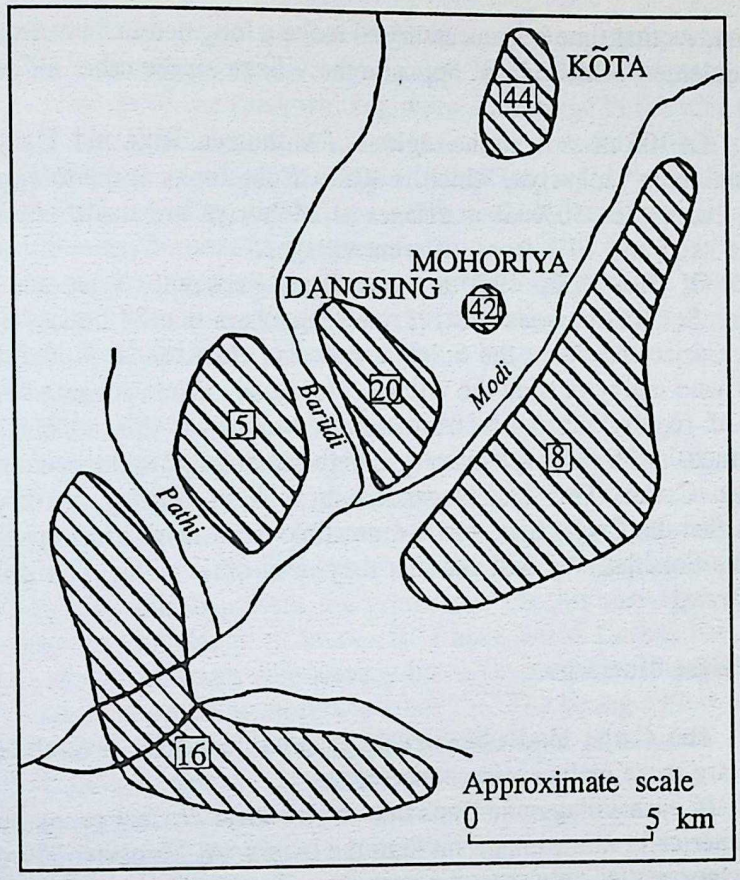

Figure 21 - Map of marriages.

The families of those married all live in the Modi Valley, with three near exceptions. 85% live in the Upper Modi Valley, that is to say a half day's walk from Mohoriya. 82% are found on the same slope of the Upper Modi as Mohoriya, and are concentrated for the most part in the three villages of Dangsing (to the south of Mohoriya), Mohoriya and Kõta (to the north). They therefore mainly marry girls from the same village or from settlements very close by (finding them not only in the valley but on the same side of the valley).

I think that the geographical partitioning due to the very sharp relief of Gurung country explains this very limited localisation. During the monsoon period, only the villages on the same slope are easily

reached. At that time it is necessary to make a long detour in order to get to a settlement which is just opposite the village on the other side of the valley.

Of 106 cases from the regions of Mohoriya, Kõta and Dangsing, 42 came from Mohoriya, which is 40%. If one looks at the total of 136 cases, more than 30% of marriages at Mohoriya are made within the village itself and 70% from different villages.

Of this 70%, 49% are marriages between Carjat and 51% between Solahjat persons. But, if one remembers that 27 houses belong to the Carjat and 54 to the Solahjat it seems clear that it is mainly the Carjat who marry outside the village. Moreover, if one considers the 39 cases of regular marriages from within Mohoriya, this conclusion is confirmed, as 36 cases are marriages between Solahjat and three only are between Carjat. This fact is general throughout Gurung country and shows that the Carjat have many more links with neighbouring villages than the Solahjat. We will see that they need other villages in order to get married.

2. - Carjat Marriage.

The Carjat kind of marriage is conditioned by several factors which are more or less interconnected.

In each village one finds one or two local descent groups which are numerically more important than the others. At Mohoriya, 17 of the 27 Carjat families belong to the same lineage of the *kon* clan, while the other lineages are only represented by one, two or three families. Often the same lineage is represented in several villages in the same valley. Thus it seems that several centuries ago the *plon* established themselves at Kota. More than 200 families are descendants of these *plon* and live there today. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, some of them went to settle on the east slope of the valley in two new villages and founded two local descent groups.

The *kon* of Mohoriya offers an analogous example. Some *kon* of Dangsing village emigrated during the nineteenth century to Kõta and Mohoriya and created two new local groups. Let us note in passing that new lineage groups do not always become numerically the most important of the village. In the two preceding examples, the *plon* of

Lahdruk and Pẽhckoi and the *kon* of Mohoriya are most important. The *kon* at Kõta, in contrast, only form a small local descent group.

If we recall the rules which govern a marriage in the four Carjat clans and the preceding conclusions touching the limitations of the geographical area in which marriages take place, we can conclude that a characteristic of a Carjat marriage is that it takes place in a limited area between a small number of lineages.

On the other hand, a Carjat marriage only rarely unites two people born in the same village. It is thus natural that the lineages living in the area in question are connected by a large number of marriages, and the same with the villages.

This situation coincides with the Carjat tendency to prefer matrilateral marriages, although it does not quite explain it. By matrilateral marriage [3] in a patrilineal system, we mean a type of marriage in which the son replicates the marriage of his father, his wife's brother being the son of his mother's brother. Among the Gurungs, or the Carjat, no rule expresses the preference for this marriage. But, in fact, there is a tendency to favour it. I have heard Carjats say: "It is good to marry a woman who already has a close relationship of affinity with us because we know more about her"... "The young wife is not like a stranger in the local descent group of her husband. She finds a {classificatory} mother and a {classificatory} sister there", or yet again: "Marriage negotiations are much easier when the families of the parents of the future couple are already connected by several marriages". I will also cite the words of a *pucu* priest which clarify the meaning of the previous remarks: "If one marries the daughter of one's father's sister, the gifts made during funerals create an abnormal situation: that which is given by the brother of the wife of the deceased goes into the hands of his son, who is the son-in-law of the dead person" (cf. p. 288).

To sum up, the Carjat do not like marrying with a paternal cross cousin. The facts prove this. On the other hand, they have a tendency to look for a wife in a family with whom they have already established relations of affinity. These two observations lead me to conclude that they have a tendency to favour matrilateral marriage.

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[3] Cf. C. LÉVI-STRAUSS, *Structures élémentaires de la parenté*, and L. DUMONT, *loc. cit.*, p. 118.

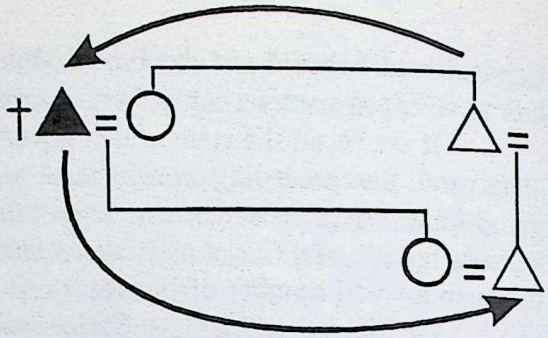

Figure 22 - Prestations at funerals and patrilateral marriage.

Even though it had been impossible for me to get complete information on all the people included in the genealogies covering more than three generations, a study of these genealogies shows that patrilateral marriage is rare whilst matrilateral marriage is more frequent. The cases of marriage with a patrilateral cross cousin are rare, particularly in a direct or immediate form (fig. 23, a). This inversion of the relation of intermarriage appears most often in an indirect way, either jumping a generation (fig. 23, b), or having recourse to a classificatory equivalent (figs. 23, c); the Carjat have little taste for patrilateral marriage and symmetrical exchange.

Matrilateral marriage appeared fairly frequently in its direct form (fig. 24, a), but I do not have any example where the relation of intermarriage reproduced itself in the third generation. Much more frequent are the cases where the relation of intermarriage appeared in a more complex form, the wife not being a daughter of a "real brother" of the mother, but of a classificatory brother of the mother (figs. 24, b).

Another example is more complex (figs. 24, c): the relation between lineages is maintained during three generations, but through families or lineages from different localities.

A family of a local descent group in village 2 is installed in another village, 3, and has founded another local group.

A lineage from village 2 gives a wife to a lineage of village 1 at the first and third generation, while a lineage from village 3 intervenes in the intermediate generation.

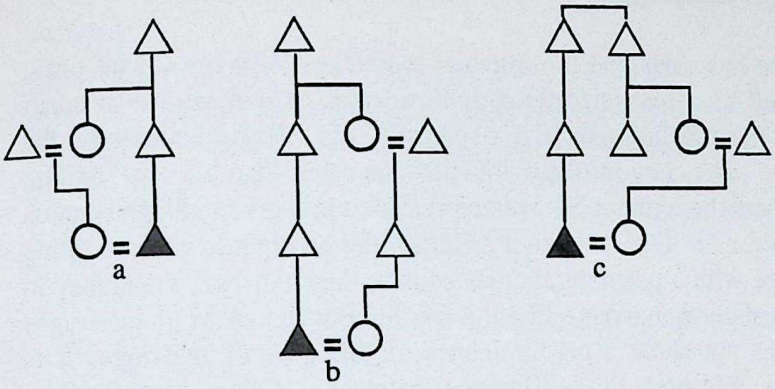

Figure 23 - Patrilateral marriage.

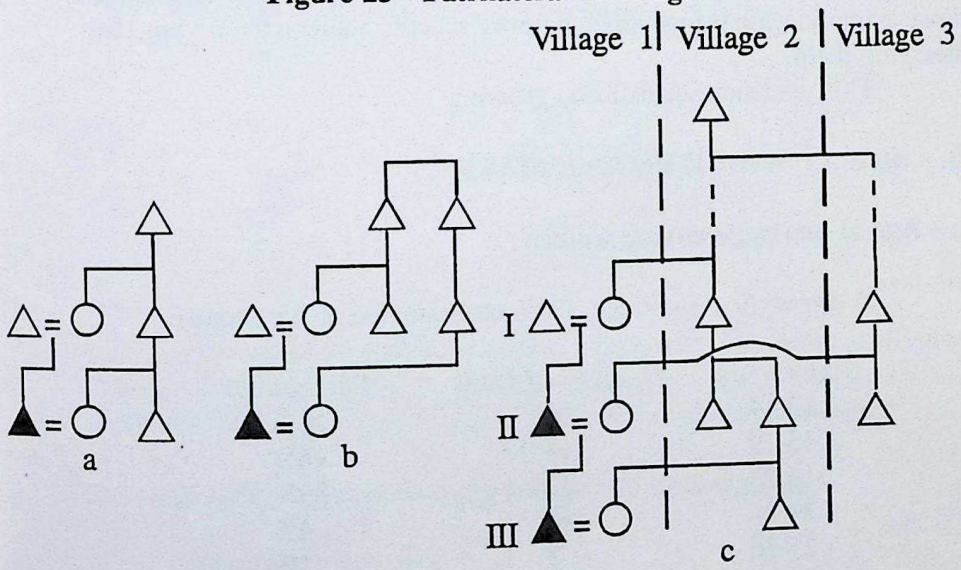

Fig. 24. Matrilateral marriage.

Note also that links through marriage are often interrupted for a generation.

In conclusion, the cases of matrilateral marriages, in these complex forms, are frequent among the Carjat, but the inverse of the connection, through marriage with a cross cousin on the paternal side, is rare.

3. - Solahjat marriages.

One has seen that the Solahjat marriages, like the Carjat ones, were limited to a restricted geographical area. In contrast, it is much more easy for a Solahjat to find a spouse in his village, because on the one hand he can marry into any Solahjat clan other than his own, and on the other hand the number of clans represented in a given village is much larger than for the Carjat. Like the Carjat, the Solahjat have little liking for marriage with a patrilateral cross cousin; they express a tendency to favour matrilateral marriage like the Carjat. But the cases of marriages observed do not show a predominance of this type of marriage. It is difficult to interpret this difference between Carjat and Solahjat marriages. Note, however, that nowadays marriage for love is much more frequent among the Solahjat: within the village, a boy and a girl form a relationship which their parents accept, reluctantly or not, by marrying them.

This tendency seems to be growing.

D. - AGE AT WHICH PEOPLE MARRY.

I. - Age at marriage among women.

a) *Age at first marriage* (237 cases studied at Mohoriya).

Age Group	Number of cases	Percentage
13-14	13	6%
15-18	114	48%
19-22	92	39%
23-26	10	4%
27-30	3	1%
31-34	2	1%
35-38	3	1%

Several marriages take place, or to be more exact had taken place when the girl was 13-14 years old. In fact, the 13 cases shown are those of women who are now 30 or more. Nowadays, the marriage of very young girls is rare. Many of the soldiers, coming back to the village to

marry, have got hold of the idea that it is not good to marry a very young girl.

87% of young girls marry when they are between 15 and 22 years; 8% between 23 and 40 years. At Mohoriya, there is no man or woman of 40 who had never married. A Gurung thinks that an adult who never marries is an abnormal being. A lot of people were astonished, often making humorous remarks, that I was still unmarried. Marriage, alone, gives an adult his full status [86].

b) *Age at second marriage.* - (after death of the first husband or divorce) 17 cases:

Age group	**Number of cases**
15-18	1
19-22	2
23-26	5
27-30	4
31-34	-
35-38	2
39-42	-
43-46	2
47-50	1

The woman under 30 usually remarries following a divorce having taken place early in the first marriage. In contrast, the second marriage after 30 is mainly due to the death of the first husband.

2. - Age difference between couples at the first marriage.

95 cases

Number of years	**Number of cases**
-6 months to -1 year	5
0 to 3	22
4 to 7	31
8 to 11	16
12 to 15	15
16 to 19	5
20 to 23	1

This statistic confirms the conclusions drawn in the chapter on demography (pp. 34-36).[87]

Almost no man marries before he is 22. However, this does not explain the big age difference that exists among more than 35% of the couples. In fact, if we consider that a certain number of women marry when they are 16-17 years, that only gives us a maximum difference of 5 to 6 years. On the contrary, it is easy to find a reason for this phenomenon in the fact that many men serve abroad as soldiers. They are not pressed into marriage since being soldiers they would only have a little chance of living with their wives during the first 8 to 10 years of their marriage. A soldier therefore prefers to wait until he is 30-35 years before he marries. He is then coming up to the age of retirement after 15 years in the service and his pension is assured. Moreover, he often marries a widow or a young divorced woman. Finally, note that at the first marriage the husband is almost always older than the wife.

E. - THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

In itself the Gurung wedding has no religious significance. The ceremony is extremely simple. In summary it marks the beginning of the legitimate conjugal life of a man and a woman, by transforming their single, celibate status to that of a married person. Neither lama, nor *pucu*, nor *klihbrī* intervenes during the ceremony. Only the brahmin, in rich weddings of a Hindu character, plays some sort of role.

I have never found any reference to a religious rite of marriage in the histories told by the *pucu*, which on several occasions describe weddings. A man decides to marry a woman. He considers the clan and lineage relations with the latter, and if these permit, he takes her to his home, or to that of his father, without any particular rite being performed.

The word for "marriage" used nowadays is Nepali: "*biyā*". *Biya la-ba*: to get married or to marry (*la-ba*: "to do", in Gurung).

In a history told by the *pucu* priest, in the Gurung language, I have found a short passage in which a man proposes to a woman. Even though this passage is in old Gurung, and consequently difficult to translate, I will quote it here as I think it is most interesting.

- *ṅe-do phai-na yu-lo, tuh-do phai-na yulo*,[4] says a man called *a-pa-kahrab-kleh*.
"I have come to join your family".

- *ṅo-ji ṅe-ji ṅe-na a-ta, tuh-ji tuh-na a-ta*, (replies the woman).
"Our connections are not good".

- *ṅa-ji ṅe-ri ṅe-ja śe-mu, tuh-ri tuh-ja śe-mu*, (says the man).
"I know our connections".

- *ṅe-ro phai-na bha-ji*, (he adds).
He takes her in order to join her family.

It is unfortunately impossible to translate this conversation word for word. It is told in a language which has some words and suffixes which are no longer used, and some repetitions which give rhythm to the recitation chanted by the priest. (The translated summary which I have given has been discussed with Gurung informants).

Despite the uncertainties in the translation, the significance of a Gurung marriage comes out in this conversation. To marry is to join together the families of the two persons involved. We will have occasion to return later to this important fact.

Wedding ceremonies usually take place only between mid-October and the beginning of April. No rule forbids them taking place outside this period. I have assisted at a marriage in August. The young husband, a soldier in Malaya, came home on leave from May to September and the families of the future married couple did not want to wait to celebrate the marriage until his next leave three years later.

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[4] *ṅa-ji*: I
ṅo-ji: we
phai-ba: join, marry
yu-ba: come
śe-ba: to know
bha-ba: to take, to take away.
The persons *ṅe* include the kin of the spouse. The *ṅe* are the people who have "given" women to the lineage of Ego (cf. pp. 285 sq.). *tuh*: is not used these days. My informants think that the word is a form of *tah* signifying "kin of the lineage of Ego".

Gurungs prefer to marry their children during the dead season as they have more free time. Agricultural activity from April to October is such that the preparation and celebration of a wedding, even a simple one, would upset the work in the fields and risk causing a delay in carrying though agricultural operations.

The marriage ceremony nowadays is still very simple. However, in the course of the last centuries, certain rites of a Hindu character have been added. Furthermore, some well-off families call in a brahmin, and the ceremony then becomes a lot more complicated; I will only describe weddings of the most usual sort.[5]

The bridegroom, accompanied by some young friends or family of his own generation, arrives in his future wife's village[6] on the evening before the wedding or very early the next day; he is led to the house of his future in-laws. Inside the house, the betrothed couple sit down side by side. The girl's father and mother put a little bit of rice mixed with *dhai* or *dahi* (nep., boiled skimmed milk) on the foreheads of the future couple and wish them a happy life. They then wash their daughter's feet and take a drop of the water so used to their lips. Several presents are then offered to the wife by her family. Sometimes, a present given by the parents of the groom may be handed over to the parents of the bride. The marriage ceremony in the bride's village is finished.

A little after the couple, escorted by the friends of the groom who are joined by friends of the bride, leave for the groom's village. In her in-laws house the young bride receives new clothes which she will wear all day. Then, rice mixed with *dahi* is put on the young couple's foreheads by a boy whose father and mother are alive, and by the older members of the village and the groom's family. When they have finished this gesture, they give the young couple their wishes for their happiness. At night, the young wife sleeps in her in-laws house next to the girlfriends from her village who have come with her. During three days at least, the young couple stay in this house. Then the wife sets out

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[5] NORTHEY and MORRIS give a description of a Gurung marriage with a very Hinduised rite done by a Brahmin, which was told to them by a Gurkha soldier. For my part, I did not witness such a ceremony (loc. cit., p. 194).

[6] If the two future spouses live in the same village, the ceremony takes place in the same way, with the obvious exception of the moving from the one village to another.

again for her village with her friends and comes back a little later, alone this time, to finally come and live with her husband [88].

During the 15 or 20 days which follow, the young wife, especially when she comes from another village, feels ill at ease in the family of her in-laws. She is ignorant of their habits and does not know where the household things are kept. She only speaks to her husband through the medium of a third person. The consummation of the marriage often only takes place two or three weeks after the wedding day if the couple had only met once or twice before the marriage and if they live in the house of the husband's parents. The presence of the latter, the brothers and sisters of the husband who sleep in the same room, embarrass the couple and makes them clumsy and shy.

I have never attended a marriage celebrated by a brahmin. However, a brahmin and a rich Gurung landowner who had just married his daughter according to Hindu custom described it to me. It is far from resembling a true Hindu marriage which is celebrated in Chetri or Brahmin villages in Nepal. Its ritual is very incomplete. A single fact is of note here: as in the traditional marriage, when the girl's parents have put rice and *dahi* on the foreheads of the couple, they wash the girl's feet and put a drop of the used water on their lips. In India, the washing of the feet of the spouses is currently done by the parents of the bride. It may reveal an hypergamous significance, as among the Brahmins of Bengal.[7] Here, only the bride has her feet washed by her own parents.

It seems to be a question of the borrowing of a ritual which I have observed in Brahmin villages in the lowlands of Nepal, a ritual which temporarily places the bride above her family for the duration of the marriage, as seems to be the case in India for both spouses.[8] Whilst considerably weakening it, the Gurungs seem to have borrowed this attitude.

We have indicated that, during the negotiations, the parents of the groom would often send one rupee to those of the bride as a token of friendship. The prestations, small and optional, are all orientated in the same direction. Is there a suspicion of hypogamy here? In any case this fact is of no importance to the future relations of the parents of the

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[7] H.H. RISLEY, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1892.

[8] L. DUMONT, *Une sous-caste*, pp. 225-6.

couple. In fact, on all occasions, if the two families meet they eat the same food, and the guests are treated with all the politeness due to them from their hosts. At funerals, the maternal uncle and the brother of the wife of the deceased are received by the latter's family. During the rite called *rhil-kahe-ba* the *pucu* or *klihbrī* priest speaks to the dead man's soul in the name of the two families of the couple without giving precedence to one or the other.

The rite which takes place in the house of the husband's kin leads us to make several comments. It is not the parents who put rice and *dahi* on the forehead, but the elders of their family, of their local descent group and of other groups of the village. The marriage is therefore sanctioned not by the parents but by the community in which the young couple are going to live. Thus the publicity necessary for the marriage is assured. The elders accept the couple in the community and give them their blessing that they may live there in peace and happiness.

Before the village elders, a young boy also puts rice and *dahi* on the forehead of each of the spouses and wishes them happiness. This boy still has his father and mother. The happiness which he wishes the young couple, is that of a son whose parents have had a long life. As far as the Gurungs are concerned, this wish is very understandable since the young couple desire above all things to have a son who will be able to inherit his father's property and assure descendants.

F. - THE BRIDE AND HER IN-LAWS.

A lot of men marry before they are 30-35 years old. The division of paternal property between the sons not yet having taken place, the young couple must live under the same roof as the husband's parents. Thus women spend the first five to ten years of their married life in their in-law's house, particularly when they marry the eldest son of a family who must wait until all his younger brothers are adults before the division of the property can take place. The young wife lives with her in-laws, her husband's sisters and brothers and sometimes with the wives of his brothers. It is the relation between all these persons living under the same roof and the new bride that we are going to examine.

It is first of all necessary to make a distinction as to whether the daughter-in-law is of the same village as her in-laws or not. If the young wife is of the same village, her in-laws would have known her since she was a baby. Thus she does not find herself altogether a stranger in the new home and can speak there without embarrassment. In contrast, when she goes to another settlement, she must make herself known and appreciated. In the village, she has no friends in whom she can confide and with whom to chatter. At first, she is the prisoner of her husband's family. However, her position is far from being as difficult as that which is found in the joint families of the Indian type. The perspective here is different. The young bride does not stay all her life in her in-laws' home. She must only spend a brief period there whilst waiting for her husband to separate from his parents and to found an independent family. She continues to learn from her mother-in-law the role of mistress of the house so that one day she can manage her own household. Consequently the mother-in-law has not got the same hold over her daughter-in-law as in India.

The attitude of the daughter-in-law towards her parents-in-law and towards her older brothers and sisters-in-law, is one of respect. It is a general attitude in Gurung society. One must respect one's elders. As the husband respects his elder brothers and sisters and his parents, so his wife must submit to the same rule. The new couple does not have any personal property. Each member of the family must therefore work under the orders of the head of the yet undivided family, who is the father of the husband. His daughter-in-law follows his orders as she would those of her own father, but knowing that she is working now for her future household whereas formerly she only worked for her brothers.

The feelings between father-in-law and daughter-in-law are fairly similar to those between father and daughter, without there being any embarrassment, so that the daughter does her tasks conscientiously. In the beginning, when she still has no child, she works in the fields with her father-in-law whilst the mother-in-law prefers to busy herself with less tiring housework. Relations between the daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law are often less harmonious. The mother-in-law has her own ways of doing things and forces the daughter-in-law to follow them blindly. To have a daughter-in-law means to have the power to put certain more disagreeable tasks onto younger shoulders. The mother-in-law leaves little time for her daughter-in-law to rest during the day and

complains of her laziness. She is more authoritarian with her daughter-in-law than with her daughter. She also occasionally develops a certain feminine jealousy of the wife of her son. Her position as mistress of the house is actually quite precarious. If her husband died, she would have nothing and would be housed by one of her sons. The daughter-in-law would then play the role of mistress of the house and the mother-in-law, although always respected, would only have a secondary place in the new house and would not have the same authority over her daughter-in-law. However, it is necessary to stress the fact that in general there is not serious conflict between mother and daughter-in-law and that their relationship is marked as one of sincere friendship.

The status of a daughter-in-law changes when she gives birth to a son, an event desired not only by the husband but, just as much, by his parents. By producing a male heir, she affirms her position in her husband's lineage and acquires in the same way the right to talk in family discussions in the name of her son. It must not be forgotten that the young mother is often alone in a village. Her husband is in the army and it is she who represents him in his family.

If there are other daughters-in-law in the house, the relationship of the young wife with them is generally quite good. The young daughters-in-law respect the older ones just as sisters do. Often two or three wives live with their parents-in-law whilst their husbands are absent. If they are all strangers in the village, their position with regards to their parent-in-laws is the same. Being separated from their husbands, they have a tendency to confide their troubles and boredom amongst themselves, an attitude which it is difficult for them to take with their mother-in-law. For all this they do not form a hostile group towards the latter. They are merely encouraged by their common situation to come together and thus make up for the absence of affection and comfort which they should get from a real married life.

The young wife does not often live with her husband's brothers, especially the elder ones, as they are usually soldiers. But when it does happen, their relationship is not marked by any embarrassment, the age and sex determining the degree of reciprocal respect.

CHAPTER X

THE FAMILY

A man can live with a woman without any marriage ceremony having been celebrated. No official document is drawn up at the time of the marriage, although, in contrast, the decision to divorce is registered by the village headman in order to allow those divorced to remarry legitimately [89]. However, it is rare that a marriage ceremony is not celebrated, especially at a first union. There is no ceremony when the parents of the couple do not consent to the marriage because it infringes certain traditions without going as far as being unlawful. Thus when a Carjat girl marries a Solahjat boy, the Carjat family refuses to celebrate the marriage but do accept the situation in fact and have normal relations with the new couple. The family which the latter creates participates with full rights in the life of the community.

A. - THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

The man is the head of the family. It is he alone who has the ownership of all the family goods. He directs the life of his household and is respected in consequence. In the house, his wife serves him his meals and generally only eats after him. When the couple travel, the man often walks in front. It is necessary to remember here that in Gurung country one can only walk in single file because of the narrowness of the paths. Thus one can only walk in front or behind another person. But when a group of villagers go to work, in the lowlands for example, men and women intermingle, the latter preceding or following the men. In the same way in a funeral procession there is no order of precedence, the

officiants alone always walking at the head. During village festivals, men and women have a tendency to group together according to age and sex. The married women, neighbours and relatives meet together, the men do the same, but one often sees a married couple sitting side by side in the crowd with their children.

When a couple is host to another family, the two couples eat together. The master of the house and the male guest are on one side of the fireplace. The female guest is usually put near to the mistress of the house and eats on the other side of the fireplace. She earnestly begs her hostess not to serve her straight away, "she will eat with her when the men have finished", but the mistress of the house insists and serves her straight away to mark the respect one must give to guests whatever the sex. When agnates of a local descent group meet together with their wives in a house, men and women participate in the conversation without a definite place being given to anyone. The men most respected for their age or their high rank in the army sit on the bed or beds, the other guests on the floor. Alone, the mistress of the house keeps her place always between the fire and the inner wall.

During the daytime, whether in the village or the fields, men and women speak to each other without embarrassment in order to discuss a common problem or to throw out jokes.

To sum up, the segregation of the sexes is not very marked in Gurung society. Within the family, two facts tend to make it negligible. When a woman has had children and above all when she has married off her son or sons and her daughters-in-law live with her, she becomes in fact the person within the family with the most authority. When he is over 50-55 years, the head of the family devotes all his time to the animals, leaving the work in the fields to his sons and daughters-in-law. He is very often away from the house and sleeps in the temporary stable made in the fields outside the village. The wife is alone in the house and organises the agricultural work, the man only giving orders or controlling their execution when he comes to the village. Moreover, during the last twenty or thirty years, a lot of wives have been left alone in the village for part of their life, their husbands serving as soldiers abroad. During the absence of the husband, all the management of the house and the education of the children are entrusted to the woman. Certainly, she asks the advice of the men of her husband's local descent group, but she is none the less responsible for the execution of all the domestic or

agricultural activities. She thus acquires the right to speak, to give her advice in family or village meetings, being at the same time in a position to discuss current problems and to take up her responsibilities. The married woman between 30 and 35 years is very far from resembling the young wife of 20. Not only has she affirmed her position in her husband's family by giving offspring to the lineage , but she has taken authority by having to face the heavy tasks and responsibilities of the life of the family alone. Her arbitration is often asked as the men appreciate the distinctive judgments of certain of the women who have acquired great assurance. The mistress of a house at Mohoriya, 42 years old, whose husband is in India and son in Malaya, is often asked by the village Council or by some families to give her advice, for example to arbitrate in a dispute over property. Thus mercenary soldiering has as a consequence raised the status of women by giving them incontestable authority, not only within their own household but also in the village community.

To a certain extent, the relationship between husband and wife is founded on the solidarity of the couple in the every day happenings of family life. Note here that among the Gurungs this quality is not the only form of solidarity. There also exists a kind of solidarity which binds all the members of the village community. It helps to keep harmony there, a harmony which the inhabitants make it almost a duty to maintain, being always ready to arbitrate a dispute if they are invited to. The great sociability of the women has an unfortunate counterpart. Their gossiping is often the source of conflicts between families and it is up to the men to try to repair the damage caused. Men generally remain aloof from their wives' long conversations in low voices and the laughter which they dread. They often say: "Ah! women, they always look downwards!" Their world is small and they do not consider the distant consequences of their actions.

A couple never show their mutual affection in public by tender words or gestures. Sexual relations take place, in general, only at night inside the locked house, in silence, the woman going to join her husband on the bed which he uses. When they are still living with the husband's parents, intimacy is much rarer, so my informants tell me, because the couple feel embarrassed to carry out the sexual act in the presence of the whole, more or less sleeping, family. In contrast, when they live during a week in the fields, sleeping alone in a hut, nothing prevents them from

having intercourse. It is the same when the couple is installed in their own house and the children are young.

Sexual relations between spouses are also hindered by the absence of a husband who is a soldier. To the direct question: "In relation to sexual intercourse, do you resent the absence of your husband?", several wives of soldiers answered me: "We women are different, we are not like you men. We are able to do without frequent relations with our husbands". This response seems to be confirmed by the fact that adultery is very rare on the part of women whose husbands are away. The life led by soldiers's wives is very hard because they must do work in the fields as well as in the house. A work day begins at 5 or 6 in the morning and does not finish before 10 at night. Often, they are even husking the rice at the *kuni* until 2 or 3 in the morning. Such use of time leaves them only a little leisure for thinking of having romantic adventures with men of the village, affairs which are not, moreover, made easy by the rules which limit irregular sexual relationships in a Gurung village.

The husband, if he is a soldier in India or Malaya, also seems to avoid having extra-marital relations. The information which follows was given to me by military doctors and Indian and British officers. The Gurungs, like the other Gurkha soldiers, are subjected to periodic medical examination which allows for the detection of cases of venereal disease. These cases are rare. Moreover, prostitutes in Singapore, for example, are very often infected and it is only in these houses that soldiers can find partners. An English doctor, practising in the Gurung country, told me that cases of venereal disease were infrequent in the area which he knew which is near the Modi valley. But this information cannot be used to corroborate the former since infected soldiers are treated by the health services in the army. Nevertheless, it seems that soldiers billeted abroad have little sexual contact with the women whom they associate with there.

B. - RELATIONS BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

When a child is small the father spends a lot of his leisure time with it, especially if it is his first son. He plays with him, walks with him through the village, and worries about his health. During my stay in

Mohoriya, the fathers rather than the mothers brought sick little children so that I could give them medicine which would make them better. If the father is a soldier, he likes to teach his children to read and write during his leaves and to tell them what he has seen abroad. When she is growing up a daughter becomes closer to her mother, working directly under her supervision until her marriage. In contrast, the son becomes more and more independent from both his father and his mother, but prefers to confide in the latter. When he is 16-18 years and of an age to work in the fields, he often goes with his father who teaches him his skills as a cultivator, but the great respect that he has for his father tends to make him behave in a reserved manner when he is near him. In contrast, he speaks very readily with his father's brothers, even though he respects them just as much. If his father is a soldier, the son often does not know him well. He is not used to living intimately with him and he has tended to get close to his mother who has been alone in bringing him up.

Even when their daughter is married, her parents stay very close to her. If she lives in another village, they regularly stay with her for 10 to 15 days. The father and mother chat into the small hours with her, and the father is happy to cradle her small children in his arms. In the case where their daughter decides to leave her husband, the parents make no objection. At most, if the cause of the rupture is not serious, they advise her to make it up with her husband.

When he is between 18 and 19 years, the young Gurung goes abroad to become a soldier. This situation creates a certain number of problems touching the relations between parents and son which we will indicate. When a young Gurung decides to join up in the army, he is still living with his parents, under their authority, and must ask their permission to leave the house. At the time of the First World War many young men enlisted. One informant, an old retired Captain, calculated that 85% of the boys from Mohoriya left without their father's consent. During the Second World War, the percentage had fallen to 45%. My information enables me to fix the number of adolescents who join up nowadays with the permission of their parents at 75%. Two main reasons have forced parents to refuse to give their consent. The house needs the strength of a boy to do agricultural work: one son is already in the army, the father is getting old, or he is dead; the departure of the young man would make the working of the fields difficult. On the other hand, the

mother does not like to see her son enrol in the army. She is frightened when she thinks of him living in a foreign country, "where everything is different". She also knows that a certain number of soldiers never return to the village, whether because they die during service (illness, injury), or because they have settled down in India, most often in Calcutta. For a mother, to go to die for people and in the midst of people who are foreigners is incomprehensible. Sometimes, the father accepts his son's view but the mother refuses and puts pressure on her husband to make the boy reverse his decision.

The young soldier, in getting his way, is assured of his own maintenance. Even though he gives his savings to his family, he gets into the habit of living independently from them from the financial point of view. If he wants to buy a suit of European cut, go to the cinema, or drink beer, he does not have to ask his parents for money. Often, during one of his first leaves, he marries and decides to take his wife for three years to where he is stationed. He gets used to living with her and often with one or two young children outside his parents' authority. He acts as head of the family, even though he possesses neither house nor fields in the village. Likewise when he goes back to his parents' house, he tries to get the division of the paternal lands as soon as possible, so that he can live independently from his parents. However, several obstacles can prevent him from doing this.

In the first place, the young wife is not always very enthusiastic at the idea of seeing herself so soon at the head of a house where her husband does not live. She is still young and does not have enough experience to manage the household affairs alone. Also, it is difficult for her to deal with one or two young children and to work in the fields at the same time. Finally, when one knows the highly developed taste of the Gurungs for the life of the group, one can easily imagine that the prospect of three years of semi-solitude would hardly appeal to the young wife. Also, she often accepts life with her parents-in-law, despite the inconveniences that this situation presents. She works in the fields whilst her mother-in-law busies herself with the children in the house.

Another obstacle stands in the way of the creation of an independent household for the young soldier. He must wait until his other brothers are adult and his sisters are of an age to marry before being able to get a share of the paternal property and to set up an independent household. It is rare that a father refuses to divide his property before his

death. When this happens, the head of the village or the members of his local descent group intervene and press him to transfer an equal part of his property to each of his sons (the full partition can only be done after the death of the father). It is impossible for a man to establish himself outside the paternal house so long as the head of the family will not give him some fields. In fact, he has nothing. His wife does not bring a dowry with her (some jewels at the most). The money he has saved as a soldier is all put into the common fund of the paternal family. The age at which a son becomes independent varies a lot. Let us say that in the majority of cases it is between 30 and 35 years.

If the son decides to set up an independent household although the partial division of the paternal property has not yet been made (which rarely happens), he must take his wife and children abroad, as he cannot live in the village. If the division of the lands has not taken place, the son cannot live on his own in the village or be sure of his family's subsistence, as his parents will certainly refuse to help them because he does not accept the joint possession of goods. The only cases which I have noted are those of soldiers who have given up military life and work in India in the civil sector. Their wives and children live with them; usually they send nothing more than news to their parents. To deny family solidarity by wishing too soon to have his freedom, condemns a son to exile himself from the village, not because the village disapproves of him - this business only concerns his immediate family and parents - but because the parents cannot accept the independence of one son without injuring the others. But, in a division, the Gurungs are very punctilious about the perfect equality of the parts, and this is only possible if each son receives his share at the same time, in addition to that which he has been able to bring previously to the undivided property. Nevertheless, it is necessary not to underestimate a son's indisputable attachment to the paternal house and his profound respect for his father's authority. I have often been able to verify this during conversations between a father and his married son at home on leave and in the way the latter behaves during his stay in the village [90].

C. - RELATIONS BETWEEN GRAND-PARENTS AND GRAND-CHILDREN.

Grand-children and more generally the "young ones" often make jokes with regard to their grandparents, the "old ones". The distance which exists between children and their parents disappears. They speak to grand-parents in a playful tone and the latter like to laugh with the youngsters. One smiles at their deafness and their tendency to repeat themselves. The old men potter about here and there, the old women busy themselves with little things and keep in the background. The attitude of the younger generation does not go so far as to show a lack of respect, quite the opposite. One listens in silence to an old person telling his reminiscences. At village meetings, one takes his advice into consideration. It is he who officiates at the village *pūjā* or in local descent groups. He represents to some extent the link between the generations who have disappeared and the new ones. It is he who knows the best of the old traditions to which all are profoundly attached; in this sense, it could be said that he has the role of teacher.

D. - RELATIONS BETWEEN CHILDREN.

The intimacy of relations between immediate brothers which develops during childhood continues all their lives. Certain conflicts arise from a rivalry between their wives when the division of the paternal goods takes place. But they are only transient. A real affection unites brothers throughout their lives. Sometimes two brothers serve in the same unit in India or Malaya and they come back on leave at the same time. If they correspond, their letters leave no doubt about the deep attachment which binds them. They also need one another: they cultivate their lands more easily by helping each other. The eldest brother is particularly respected by his younger brother or brothers.

Brother and sister know each other less well. Whilst young, they are quickly separated by their different activities. The sister marries at 16-19 years. The brother leaves for the army at 18-20 years. After that they may see each other only rarely, the one only coming to the village on leave, and the other, if she lives in a village a long way off, having

little chance of coming back to her parents' house at the same time. However, no embarrassment or other barrier separates them when they do meet and the friendship which has united them during their childhood still continues. If a sister breaks with her husband, and if her parents are dead, one of her brothers will take her in despite the financial difficulties which this new charge will bring. He will go to the village where his sister was married in order to get a divorce if the ex-husband refuses. When we look at the prestations at funerals, we will see that the brother is in fact the one who "gives" his sister in marriage to a man and that he keeps the role of "giver" when the funeral ceremonies are celebrated at his brother-in-law's house.

Sisters are, in general, very united during their childhood, working and entertaining themselves together. Marriage separates them. Only a burial will sometimes reunite them. They may also agree to go to visit their parents at the same time.

Note in conclusion a custom, very widespread in Nepal and which is found amongst the Gurungs, in which two men not connected by kinship enter into a fraternal relationship. Two young men who are very attached to one another can decide to become henceforth like two brothers (*mit*: friend, nep.). The ceremony is very simple. The parents of one of the two boys puts a little rice mixed with *dahi* on their foreheads (we have described a similar rite at marriage), then the two young men greet them ceremoniously in the way in which a son does when he returns to the house after a long absence. Finally, the two boys exchange presents and a good meal is served to them. From this moment, they think of each other as brothers and each calls the parents of his "brother", "father" and "mother". They tell me that by this means they can show that the feeling that binds them is stronger than the friendship between two strangers; it is "fraternal friendship". They promise to act towards each other as brothers, and towards their respective parents as sons. But this agreement does not give the friend-son a legal position in the family of a real son.[1] For example, at Mohoriya, two Carjat boys, one a *lama*, the other a *kon*, decided to become brothers. The ceremony took place. Formerly, they had called each other "*ṅohlõ*", that is to say,

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[1] Cf. F.E. OKADA, "Ritual Brotherhood in Nepalese Society", *South-western Journal of Anthropology*, 1957, pp. 212-222.

"a person of my generation who can marry my sister" or even a "cross-cousin". After the ceremony, they addressed each other as "brother" and the friend-son who had called the mother of the real son "*bhu-ju*" (grandmother), a term which also has the general meaning of "a woman of an older generation", now calls her "*a-ma*" (mother) [91]. In a history told by the *pucu* one finds the following anecdote:

- A *pucu* priest met a woman whom he needed to help him execute one of his rites. She greeted him with suspicion and was ready to send him away. The *pucu* then said to her: "Let us be bound", without signifying by this that he wished to marry her. My *pucu* informants told me that this sort of agreement of friendship was similar to that between two men who were not kin but who became brothers. However, I have not met an example of this sort between a boy and a girl.

E. - THE RETURN OF THE SOLDIER TO HIS FAMILY.

It is first necessary to say a word about the soldiers who leave the army before completing 15 years service.

Despite all the advantages of the mercenary's life, quite a large number of men resign after 6 or 9 years of service. What are the motives which push them into taking this decision? An analysis of a certain number of cases of soldiers having left the army has allowed me to distinguish three main motives. Many who quit after 3 or 6 years of service seem to be dissatisfied with the discipline, and the strictness of the rules of military life. This is not surprising when we know in what conditions a young Gurung spends the first twenty years of his life. Often, the ex-soldier does not go back immediately to his village and looks for temporary work in India. He does not wish to run away from life abroad, only from military life. A large number of soldiers resign for family reasons. The parents are dead and the paternal wealth is divided. The only son must return to the village to take up the control of family affairs. Sometimes the responsibility of the house is too much for the wife who has children. She demands her husband's return; usually the latter gives in to her reasoning to avoid the break-up of the marriage. In addition, a Gurung soldier suffers when he sees friends who were

recruited with him being promoted to a higher rank whilst he remains a common soldier. His pride is wounded. He is tired of waiting for promotion and leaves the army to go back to his family. This happens mainly amongst the Sepoys, after 9 or 12 years of service. A large majority of former soldiers do not stay in India but come back to live in their natal village. But, when one knows both life in the village and life in the army, one is right to ask oneself how a retired soldier can prefer to return to the village and readapt himself to the mountain life.

The following are biographical outlines of five former soldiers born in Mohoriya.

- A retired Captain. He has served for 32 years and is now 52. He was promoted Lieutenant and then Captain by the Indian army when the British left. He conducted himself brilliantly during the Burma campaign and was wounded several times. His second wife has spent more than ten years in India with him. He speaks Hindi fluently and knows how to make himself understood in English. The savings he was able to make through his high salary and his comfortable retirement pension have allowed him to buy a lot of land and to make a vast house. He has no sons but three daughters. One is married to a soldier living in Malaya. The second (10 years old) studies in the only European college in Nepal which is in Kathmandu and which is run by Catholic missionary sisters. The third is three years old and is in Mohoriya. Most of the Captain's land is share-cropped. He keeps an eye on their cultivation and reserves for himself an orchard where he does gardening. He leads a very sedentary life, with little activity, keeping his guns up to scratch, and writing to his soldier friends. He is a man full of good advice. People often come to him to ask him to arbitrate in some disagreement. He is in negotiations about the building of a dispensary in Mohoriya to be subsidised by the Indian Army, to look after the retired soldiers living in the upper Modi valley. He confesses that "civilians" and their problems do not interest him. His greatest enjoyment is to talk of the army, war, and to meet with soldiers. However, he likes to live in Mohoriya because there he can "breathe the pure mountain air".

- An ex-Sepoy (30 years). He has served three years and was wounded in the leg in Malaya. He drinks. He receives an invalidity pension. He is married and has two children (3 and 6 years old). He

lives like a villager who has never been a soldier. He is in the fields all day and works hard. He dresses appropriately. He's well trained. He never expresses any regret for having left the army.

- An ex-Sepoy. (29 years). After serving for three years, he resigned, as he did not like the rigidity of the army, and has worked in Calcutta. Three years ago he returned to Mohoriya. He is a hardworking man and full of good sense. He talks continually of his life in Calcutta, which he regrets leaving. He misses city life and its entertainments. He came back to the village in order to get married, and his wife will prevent him from going back.

- A retired Subedar. He has served 15 years and is now 47. He was a Subedar when he retired. But instead of returning to the village where his wife lives alone, he has joined the military police on the Indian railways whilst keeping the rank of Subedar and is always busy. His family is very well off. His only son (18 years old) is in the British Army. His father had put him into the "boys" when he was 15 years old. Because of his liking for military life, he has put off the date of his return to the village up to now.

- An ex-Sepoy (35 years). After serving for nine years he has left the army which he was tired of, and has taken work in Calcutta as a messenger in a bank. His parents are poor, have little land and several sons. His wife and son (11 years old) lived with him in Calcutta. His wife has left him and lives with another man, still in Calcutta. The father has sent his young son back to Mohoriya so that his parents can bring him up.

During his military service, the soldier usually stays in constant contact with his family and his village. Letters are exchanged regularly. Men on leave are benevolent postmen loaded with parcels and letters which they distribute and collect in the villages of their valley. The soldier's family and his friends do not forget him when he is away, on the contrary. He is always in the thoughts of those who are in the village. During the evenings they talk a lot about him, commenting on letters they have got, and information given by men on leave. They anticipate what they will do during his leave: a marriage, a ceremony for

the end of mourning. A mother makes a wish that one of her children who is sick will be better before her husband comes back, so that he finds all the family in good health. Every three years, the soldier comes back, and for about five or six months lives in the midst of his own people. The first days of leave are spent in visiting family and friends who welcome him with undisguised joy. The man on leave keeps on his clothes of European cut, sticks out his chest as if on the parade ground, and goes every other day to the river to wash his underclothes and his body. At night, he enlivens the evening by talking openly of his life abroad. Then unconsciously, his family will draw him back into village life. From March until September especially, all healthy men are needed to work in the fields. The man on leave cannot refuse to help his mother, his wife, or his sisters by lounging about in the house. Whilst grumbling, but without being forced directly by his family, he resumes contact with the earth and those labours which he knew and to which he is unconsciously attached. He complains of aches in his shoulders, neck and legs after a hard day spent carrying heavy loads. He regrets the easy life of the garrison. However, the rhythm of the life of the village takes over. The soldier forgets the habits of hygiene he has learnt in the army. The young soldier home on his first leave often thinks of his next departure for the army with a certain pleasure, especially if he has just married and is taking his young wife away. By his third and fourth leave, the soldier is not so keen to go back again. For nine or twelve years, he has had time to exhaust all the joys of the life in India or Malaya. To leave the village now means leaving wife, children, and property, only to find a life of routine in the garrison, which he now has little enthusiasm for. These long leaves make it easier for the soldier to return and readapt finally from being a mercenary to village life. They immerse him periodically in the family atmosphere and allow him to keep contact with the highland society to which he belongs. However, this is not enough to explain the massive return of former soldiers to their natal villages. I think that other, more powerful motives intervene.

When a soldier returns finally to his family, he does not feel isolated from the rest of the community. The village is used to dozens of former soldiers and to men on leave. He often has old friends amongst these veterans to whom he is bound by a deep friendship. He does not lack people to talk with about the army, war, India or Malaya. Even his wife has usually been with him for three years abroad. For the last ten

or fifteen years, wives have spent the first three years of their marriage billeted with their husbands. This is a holiday period for the woman. She only has household work to do: looking after her lodgings and her newborn child. She does not have to work in the fields all the time. Her house is comfortable. Her clothes are not constantly dirty as in the village. She easily finds friends with whom to chat amongst the other Gurung or Magar women living in the cantonment. They go in groups with their husbands on occasional trips to public places to amuse themselves. (It was in a street in Singapore that I first saw Gurung women without, however, knowing who they were.) The wives have often said to me: "We like to go to India or Malaya to know how our husbands live and the country where he is living which he talks to us about when he comes back on leave. It helps us to understand the letters which he sends us when we have come back to the village." Thus, the wives take part indirectly in their husband's life of travel and adventure and know a little of the foreign culture in which most Gurung men spend part of their life. This allows them to partially bridge the gulf which has deepened between the couple who have been living respectively for 10 or 15 years, in the midst of two different cultures. Thus men and women participate more or less in Nepal-India, Nepal-Malaya assignments, and vice-versa. The village community keeps its homogeneity and does not put the former soldier into a particular predicament.

Once back at the village, the pensioner is not a complete prisoner within it. During the winter he goes to Pokhara or the recruitment centre to draw his pension. It is necessary to understand that economically this operation is not very profitable. Sometimes the soldier spends the amount of his pension, sometimes more (in the case of a Sepoy) during the journey, which is an occasion for passing several days away from the village and of meeting his army friends again. If he goes as far as a recruitment centre in the Terai or in North India, he finds again the military framework in the midst of which he spent a number of years. The wife, despite the expenses, accepts this trip which allows her husband to put up with life in the village during the rest of the year. In old age the pensioner no longer goes to Pokhara to draw his money. Then a pay officer comes round to distribute pensions once a year.

We have already indicated the economic reasons which force Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers to return to the village. They

have built themselves a comfortable house and have been able to buy land with their savings. Their sons and daughters are married, or are soon of an age to be. Their daughters-in-law work in the fields with the young sons. Therefore they spend most of their time organising and watching over the agricultural work, or busying themselves with the animals. Thus, at Mohoriya, two retired Subedars look after the goats and cows. However, they are helped in this job by young boys. The retired Non-Commissioned Officer or Officer has an easy, non-exhausting life if he returns to the village. If he stays in India, he will not enjoy the same ease and repose. This remark is also applicable to a former Sepoy. Having no land in India, a Gurung must settle in an urban centre. Calcutta is the place usually chosen. The Nepalese colony is very large there. But, because of the influx of Indians coming from East Pakistan, unemployment is rife in this city, lodgings are very small and difficult to find, and rents are very high. A former soldier who, more often than not has no special talent, cannot hope to get into a well paid job. It is even difficult for him to find any work. Certainly, in Calcutta, in a society on the way to becoming modernised, the ex-soldier can maintain a little of the kind of life he knew in the army. Against this, he is subject to the dangers of an uncertain future. Once the paternal heritage is sold in the village, he cannot hope for any more help from this source. The savings which he made in India when he was a soldier could buy more in his natal village than they produce in Calcutta. The investments of money which he can make in India would not be able to ensure a sufficient return in his old age and his children living in India would have to help him financially, even though he had worked to an advanced age for poor wages. When he has the intention of not returning to the village, the ex-soldier must take into account his wife's attitude. The latter has only spent three years in India or Malaya, living within the cantonment. She has not had time to be deeply influenced by the foreign culture. To go and live in Calcutta with her children when she is 30 or 40 years old frightens her. When a former soldier settles in India, it is never under pressure from his wife. She is not used to the life of a big city. She does not know Hindi or Bengali and cannot count on finding work easily. Even if her family in the village is poor, she would not be less so in India.

To sum up, the Gurung ex-soldier, especially if he has spent more than 15 years in the army, has the choice of leaving the type of life

of a large Indian city, but of being assured of a decent, often easy existence, in his natal village, in the midst of his family, or of continuing to live in a more developed society, but in danger of leading a materially precarious life and finding himself cut off from his family. He usually opts for the first solution which has both family and economic advantages. However, some ex-soldiers stay in India. They have left the army after three or six years of service, and are 25-30 years old, their wife 22-25. The most important settlements are around Gorakhpur, Calcutta, and Darjeeling. The "Census of India" (1901) calculated that 7,481 people speaking the Gurung language lived in India. This number must have increased a lot since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Four former Sepoys born in Mohoriya have lived from three to eight years in India with their wives. They all came from poor families. Some no longer write to their parents, but this does not prove that they will not return one day to Mohoriya. They are employed as office boys, watchmen, etc. Among the Gurungs it seems that this migratory movement is quite recent, but that it is tending to increase. Not having been able to gather statistical information covering a large part of Gurung country, nor having contacts with Gurungs living in India, it is unfortunately impossible to make this hypothesis more precise [92].

F. - DIVISION OF LABOUR WITHIN THE FAMILY.

Men and women each have jobs which are their own. But no one laughs at a man or woman who does work usually reserved for the opposite sex. For example, men go and fetch water from the spring for domestic use.

At Mohoriya, there is a man of 29 years who is still unmarried and lives alone. Women often cited his house as one which was well kept. It is certain that during the last 20 to 30 years, the women have worked more in the fields and woods having had to take the place of their absent husbands.

The diagram (fig. 25) shows that work is divided in function according to the aptitudes of the two sexes. The man is a ploughman, a shepherd, and looks after the cows. He cuts the wood and hews stone. He carries heavy loads and weaves baskets. He does all the other agricultural tasks with his wife. When he ploughs, she sows the seed

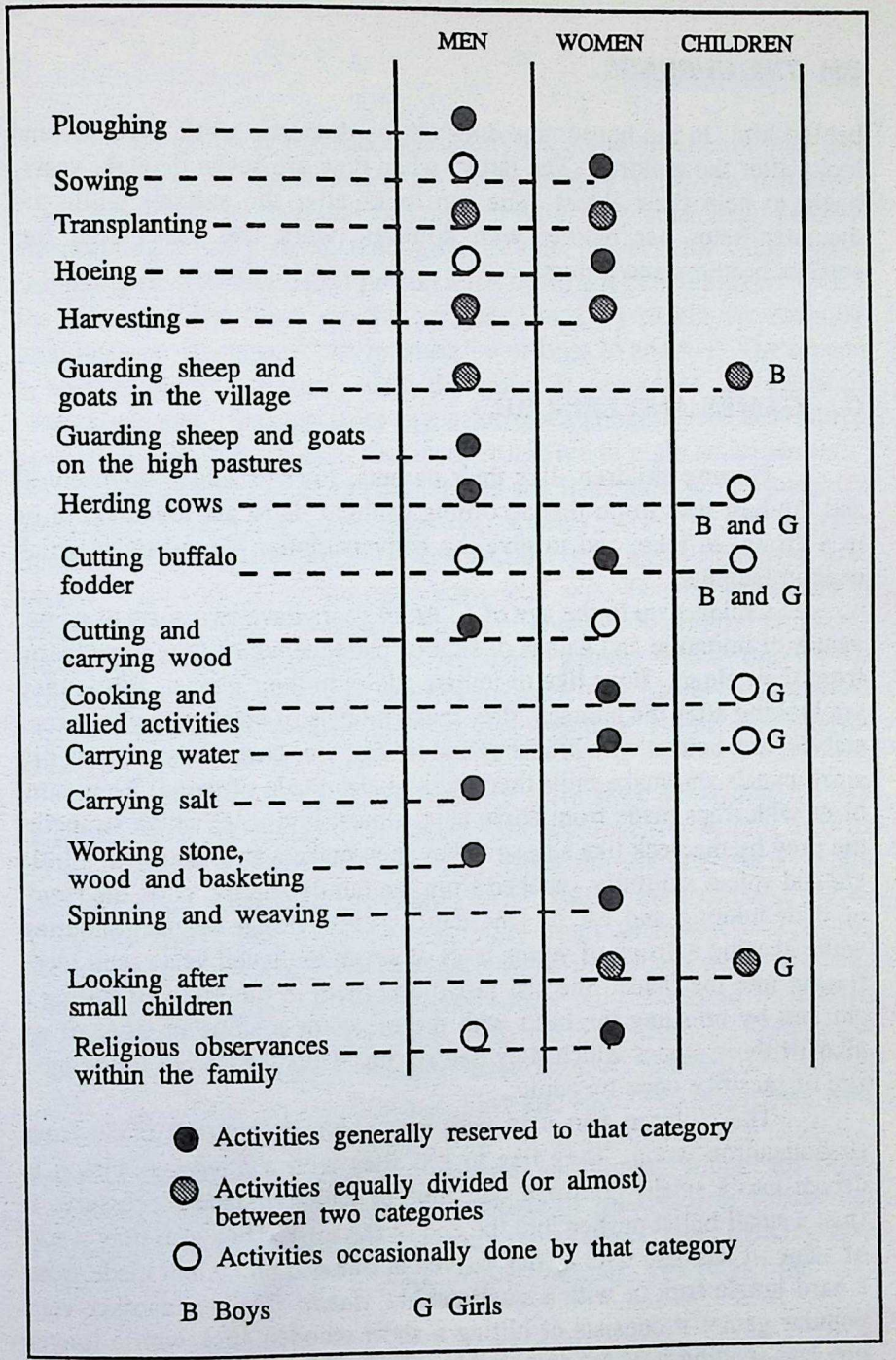

Figure 25 - Division of labour in the family [93]

behind him. In the house, she does all the domestic work, weaves, and looks after the children. The latter, when they are seven or eight years, begin to help their elders. The son looks after the animals while the daughter helps her mother with domestic work and looks after her smaller brothers and sisters.

G. - GAMES AND LEISURE.

Gurung children, like their parents, love to amuse themselves, and the best way to do this according to them is to get together, to be in a group, to joke, and to give the conversation a playful twist which ends in laughter.

Children up to the age of 13 or 14 years have two sorts of game: games of imitation and games of skill or patience which they have learnt from their elders. Boys like to imitate adults in their games. While they are looking after the animals, they make models of small ploughs, oxen, stables, and houses with branches and leaves, etc. Near streams, they dig small canals and make mills there with blades made of wood. They hunt birds with traps made from horse hair, almost invisible, which strangles the prey by the neck like a lasso. They then make a fire, and with a little *ghī* and spices skillfully pinched from the family supply, cook the result of their hunting and eat it. One day I saw a village woman shouting while chasing a group of young boys of seven to eleven years who were fleeing into the fields. She had just found them in the midst of killing a chicken by crushing the head with the blows of a stone in front of an altar of three stones which they had set up. Thus they were imitating a rite of sacrifice done by adults.

The children also play with tops (*bhurur* [*bhurun*) made from rhododendron wood. They like to kill flies with a *tamke*. A piston is driven into a small, hollowed-out, tube of bamboo. Under pressure, it fires a small bullet pushed into the end of the tube. They also play a sort of game of lacrosse with a stick curved at one end and a ball made from a hard jungle fruit or with a small pebble; *danda-śī* is also another very popular game: it consists of hitting a short wooden stick with a longer one and sending it as far as possible. They give bets against the losers (to carry another boy on his back, home to the village, etc.)

Two games of patience and ability are common to both boys and girls. The first is "tigers and cows" [*mhe kliōba*] which two can play. On a square, cut by diagonal and median lines are placed small pebbles representing twenty cows belonging to one player, and four tigers belonging to the other. One person must try to encircle the tigers which are thus lost. The other, on the contrary, must try to kill the cows by jumping over them from one intersection of lines to another. The second is very popular, especially with the girls. It resembles the game of "knuckle-bones", but the rules are a lot more complicated. It requires great ability with the hands. One uses from five to eight small stones.

When they celebrate Dasarah and at village *pūjā*, sports meetings are organised: running, stone throwing, archery, wrestling, etc. On the occasion of these celebrations, a sort of wheel is set up which allows four people to turn in the air around a horizontal axis. This entertainment is common to many Nepalese groups. During Dasarah, children, adolescents and adults join in all these games which they love. Sometimes, an argument breaks out between two players but a third makes a joke about the pair and everyone begins to laugh. The quarrel is forgotten.

Young persons between 17 and 21 years work throughout the day and only amuse themselves at night. They get together in one, two or three of the houses in the village and spend the evening there. In the villages where there is a communal house, this is their meeting place. They call these *ro-dhī* (*ro* is a hidden place where an animal lives; *to-ro*, the lair of a tiger. One uses the same *ro* to describe a mole-hill; *dhī*, house). In Nepal, the custom of the *ro-dhī* only seems to be known amongst the Gurungs.[2] The young men and girls from the village get together in the evenings without consideration of kinship. During the winter, the girls bring wool or *nañi* fibre and spin. The boys come with one or two *mahdal* (small drum). They sit in a group in the shadows, and for several hours gossip, laughter and songs, which are often improvised, follow each other. No dispute or quarrel ever breaks out during these evenings. Perfect harmony reigns there. The gathering may continue until one or two o'clock in the morning. The boys often stay

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[2] According to MORRIS (*op. cit.*, p. 200), this custom resembles that of *rang bang* which one finds on the frontier of Tibet at Garhwal.

and sleep in the house where the *ro-dhi* has taken place. This type of enjoyment shows how in certain regards the Gurungs have been little influenced by the Nepalo-Indian society of the lowlands. That the young of both sexes get together at night without being watched over by their elders, those whose families are rich or Carjat with those whose families are poor or Solahjat, would appear in the eyes of a Chetri Hindu as an aberration. The *ro-dhi* shows also the large amount of freedom which is given to non-married children once the work of the day is finished. The aim of the *ro-dhi* is to spend the evening pleasantly in a group. A boy and girl do not attempt to start an amorous intrigue there and certainly not to declare it publicly. The greatest possible restraint is observed in this regard by the young people during the gathering [3] [94].

From November to March, leisure time is at its greatest. Ceremonies such as the *pae* are then celebrated. These ceremonies of a religious character give place to merry-making to which the inhabitants of the village and neighbouring settlements come. They eat and drink well. For one or two nights, they sing and dance without stopping. Troupes of dancers and singers from neighbouring villages come and perform. The spectacle that they present has changed greatly in character during the last ten years. The old traditional dances are done as follows: one or two men move to the middle of the circle of seated onlookers. They improvise two verses and then all the audience repeat the phrase accompanied by one or two *mahdal* whilst the two men improvise a dance which the verse suggests to them. This is often a playful turn based on a play on words which brings forth laughter, especially when the dance movements take on an erotic character..The young hardly ever do these dances (certainly in the west of the Gurung country) and prefer to imitate those which they, their brothers or their fathers have seen danced in the south of Nepal and particularly in India. Adolescents disguise themselves as women with saris, and sometimes with female Gurung clothing. They dance steps popular in India whilst a group of young people sing an Indian tune, often a tune from a film they know, accompanied by the music from a small harmonium. The dancers wear sun glasses even though the performance takes place at night. Often a

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[3] Cf. R.P. SRIVASTAVA, " *Rang Bang* in the changing Bhotia Life", *Eastern Anthropologist*, vol. VI, no. 3-4, March-August 1963, pp. 190-203.

young soldier on leave, dressed in European style, leads the group of dancers, contrasting strangely with the goddesses of Hindu mythology who accompany him. It is the custom to give some rupees to these amateur troupes to add to their funds. Once or twice a year, their members organise a "picnic" (the word they use) with the money collected.

CHAPTER XI

MARRIAGE BREAK-UP AND INHERITANCE.

A. - MARRIAGE BREAK-UP.

A marriage can be ended by the death of one of the partners or by divorce. A lot of men and women marry at least twice in their lifetime, but there are more cases of remarriage among women than among the men. We have seen in the demographic study that an appreciable number of women die in childbirth or as a result of their pregnancy at between 18 and 30 years. Those who are widows or divorced have no difficulty in finding a husband. Often he will not have been married before. A widow can remarry more easily than a widower.

I. - Statistics.

The following is a summary of the changes which have taken place in the married lives of 220 women studied in Mohoriya.

First marriage:

followed by divorce 29

followed by the death of the husband 36

Second marriage:

After the death of the first husband -

followed by divorce 4

not followed by divorce 20

After the first divorce -

followed by divorce 2

not followed by divorce 19

Third marriage:

After the death of the second husband -

followed by divorce	0
not followed by divorce	3

After divorce -

followed by a divorce	1
not followed by a divorce	1

These statistics do not allow us give the percentage of divorces in regard to the number of marriages since they refer to living people, and consequently to the divorces in force.

The analysis of the figures obtained leads us to make three comments: the 45 women who have married twice have done so, either after the death of their first husband (24), or after the first divorce (21); of the 36 women who have lost their first husband, only 24 have remarried. This is not to say that a woman finds it difficult to remarry; but 9 of the 12 women who are widows have lost their first husband when they were already old and do not wish to remarry. Note finally that among the six women whose second marriage has broken up, four have remarried. If a woman is still quite young, it is of little importance to a man who wishes to marry her that she has already been married twice before, at least he will know whether she is sterile and if he would be able to have children.

2. - Divorce.

Divorce (*par la-ba*: to divorce) is most frequent during the first six to eight years of marriage. Nobody in the community would express publicly his approval or disapproval of the announcement of a divorce. If the couple have decided to part, and if their parents are not in favour of a divorce, the latter are presented with the accomplished fact and can do nothing but accept it. The divorce can be asked for by either the man or the woman.

In this type of break-up of a marriage, two stages can be distinguished. The woman leaves the conjugal household and goes back to her parents. Then the judgment of divorce is pronounced. It is always possible for the couple to resume their married life before this second stage.

In certain cases, motives play an important part as they determine which partner shall have the children and what financial arrangements will have to be made. In many cases, divorce is due to incompatibility of character. One of the two does not like living with the other. The wife finds that her husband has a bad character, that he is lazy, that he drinks a lot. The husband gives more or less the same reasons.

Has the absence of the soldier husband abroad led to more divorces in the last few years? Even though recruitment has been particularly extensive for about the last thirty years, it does not seem that the number of divorces has significantly increased. This fact is difficult to verify and is only based on the estimates of old people who were questioned. Officers of the Gurkha troops have indicated that several cases of adultery followed by divorce have happened in the cantonments and were mostly due, it seemed, to the idleness of the wives. When a young woman is alone in the village, it occasionally happens that she goes back to her parents and does not return. She generally comes from another village and has not as yet had a child. She suffers from being in the difficult position of living in a strange community, and in a house where she must submit to the moods of her mother-in-law, without the support or affection of her husband. In some cases, the prolonged absence of the husband deepens the gulf between them. The character of each has developed in a different way and the readjustment is difficult when they come together again.

It does happen that a partner who discovers that her husband or his wife has had extra-marital sexual relations asks for a divorce. However, adultery is not very frequent in Gurung society. A partner prefers to divorce if tired of her husband or of his wife rather than have extra-marital relations. The deceived partner will often forgive the unfaithful partner if the latter breaks off relations with the other person. If a child is born from the illicit union, only the genitor can be his legal father according to the Gurungs. When I asked my informants what would happen if the natural father did not wish to be named, they looked at me with surprise. "A man who has had extra-marital relations, always admits them and does not try to deny his paternity... besides one always knows everything that happens in the village!", they told me. A child can be born outside wedlock without those responsible for it being forced to marry as a consequence. But it is essential to find the father, and this does not seem to be difficult. Often, an illegitimate child at birth will

eventually become a legitimate son. In fact, the legitimate wife rarely accepts her husband's infidelity when there is a bastard child as a result of it. She will divorce him. Her ex-husband will remarry with the woman who has given him a son, and by these means he is made legitimate.

3. - Consequences of divorce.

The decision to divorce is written down, then signed by the couple and by the village headman. Sometimes the latter had to intervene with one of the spouses to compel him or her to divorce if the reasons which forced one partner to demand the break-up are judged valid - for example, if the husband has been convicted of adultery and refuses the divorce. In most cases, an amicable arrangement is accepted by both parties and the headman has only to countersign the document which is brought to him [1].

What happens to the children, if there are any, after the divorce? If it is not a case of adultery, the father has the right to keep the children. But if the mother asks for it, and the children are young, they are entrusted to her. They stay with her for several years if she does not marry again quickly. For his part, if the husband starts a new household, often he is not pressed to bring his children home, especially his daughters. Sometimes they are entrusted to one of his brothers who has no children and this brother adopts a son. But when they are 10 to 12 years old, the children return to live with their father. Usually, the couple have no more than one child when a divorce takes place.

In the case of adultery, if the woman is guilty, the husband can categorically refuse to give the children over to her for a time. If, on the contrary, it is he who is guilty, his wife has a good reason for taking over the care of the children for several years.

In general, divorce does not involve any important financial decision. The wife takes back several articles or jewels which she

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[1] LANDON (*op. cit.* vol. II, p. 243), writes: "Among the Gurungs and often among the Magars as well, divorce can easily be obtained. The husband has to pay 40 rupees for his divorce and the wife 160 rupees. Two pieces of split bamboo are tied together, placed on two mud balls and the money is put close by. If one party takes up the money, the other party can go his or her way and marry again legally." I have never seen such a ceremony.

brought at the time of the marriage. A little money may be given to her to provide for the maintenance of the children but often she gets nothing, especially if she has asked for the divorce. When there has been adultery, not only the couple but also the person who has committed adultery with one of them are affected by the divorce decision. If it is the wife who is adulterous, the man with whom she has had sexual relations must reimburse the deceived husband for the trouble which has ruined his marriage with his unfaithful wife. If the husband is adulterous, in theory he must give his wife considerable compensation to make amends for the wrong which he has caused her. He must give to her in money the equivalent of half his goods if he has no child, and if he has two sons, for example, the property will be divided into four, the husband, the wife and each child receiving a quarter. In fact this never happens. The wife always gets compensation in money, but this is far less than a quarter or half of her husband's property. She has a right to a pension which will be added to the sum which she is given for the maintenance of the child or children whom she is taking care of for the time being.

Friendly relations are not finally broken if the reason for the divorce is not sufficiently grave to cause hostility between the two families of the divorced couple. Sometimes, when at funerals, the ex in-laws of a dead person who was divorced are present at the ceremony and make the traditional offerings.

B. - INHERITANCE.

The paternal inheritance is divided equally between all the sons. Before going into the rules of inheritance in detail, it is necessary to talk briefly of a particular type of son, the adopted son.

I. - Adoption.

Frequently a man who has no male heir adopts a boy to whom he can leave his property. One never adopts a daughter. There would be no sense in this since she could not inherit the property. An orphan girl can be taken in, raised and married. Adoption would not change her status. The man who adopts prefers to chose a boy from the same clan and, even better, from his local descent group. In the genealogy of the

kon of Mohoriya, I have found four adoptions. In three cases, the person adopted is a brother's son. In the fourth case, it is the great-grandson of the brother of the grandfather. Thus, one always adopts somebody from the younger generation. The adopted boy need not belong to the same clan as the adoptive father and can be the son of a sister or the husband of a daughter (the son-in-law). This latter case is quite frequent. Sometimes a man prefers an affinal relative to an agnatic one showing the close bond which exists between two relatives connected by marriage since, if he is adopted, the affinal relative can inherit his father-in-law's property. The adopted man most often comes to live in his adoptive father's house.

One generally takes an adult as a son, not a child. The man who adopts waits as long as possible before taking the decision because he always hopes to have a son by his wife. When he is 45-50 years old, he adopts a man aged 20 years at least. Two reasons force him to choose a man between 20 and 30 years. The man adopted has passed the difficult stage of childhood during which mortality is very high. On the other hand, being adult, the adopted son can at once begin to help his new father who is beginning to get old and, in case of premature death, he could immediately become responsible for the management of the property.

In very rare cases, a man adopts an abandoned orphan. But he can only do so with the express permission of his sons, if he has them. In fact, the paternal property belongs to them by right. If their father adopts a boy, they must relinquish to the latter a part of the goods which will come to them. It is therefore up to them to decide whether or not they will accept the adoption. When a man adopts a brother's son, there is no rule which dictates which brother's son he must choose. His affection for one of them usually influences his choice. The adopted nephew can have a brother or not. The adoptive father must ask for the agreement of his own brother to conclude the adoption. Sometimes a father may have had a son or sons serving in the army abroad and he has not heard anything more of them. He can then leave his property to a man whom he adopts.

Example:

- At Mohoriya, a man had two sons. They left the village and no-one heard anything more of them. Their father adopted his brother's son who lives in the village and who, since the death of his adoptive father, owns all that belonged to the latter.

In general, the adoption is drawn up in a written contract and carries the signatures of both parties and that of the village headman, to avoid any conflict on the death of the adoptive father.

2. - The Rules of Inheritance.

The rule of inheritance can be expressed in a single phrase. All the sons, and they alone, inherit equally the property of their dead father. In the expression, "all the sons", are included the legitimate and illegitimate ones. If the father had been polygamous or if he had contracted several successive marriages, all the sons of these marriages have the right to an equal part of the inheritance. The bastards have the same right of inheritance as legitimate sons. They are "sons" like the others, this is a rule in Gurung country. All sons must be recognised by their father who gives to them his clan name. A boy is always an heir [95].

We have seen that when his sons are all adults, their father distributes to them equally a part of his property. If he has no more daughters to marry, he can go on until he only has a part equal to that which each of his sons receives, but, in general, he keeps a little more land than he gives to each of his sons. When he dies, a second apportionment takes place. If his wife is still living, she receives the same amount as each of the sons. Imagine, for example, the case of a widow and her two sons. Each receives a third of the property. But, in fact, the widow is not the owner of this third. She has only the usufruct and cannot dispose of it except with the permission of her sons. On her death, it will be divided between these two. In reality, the widow often does not receive the third part of the property. She lives in the house of one of her sons. This son is given a little larger share (generally the paternal house) to ensure the maintenance of the widow. She keeps the jewels and the goods which she had brought with her at marriage.

The father cannot show a preference for one of his sons in his will. The clause is legally void and can be contested at law. If, during his lifetime, the father had been able to favour one of his sons, though it is very rare that a father would try to do this, the balance is re-established when the final distribution is made. If, at the death of their father, one or more of the daughters have not yet married, the son who looks after them receives a temporary compensation in goods, as in the case of the widow, which enables him to provide for their subsistence. Remember that the expenses of marriage for a daughter are minimal and do not burden the sons.

The death of the head of the family does not automatically bring about the division of the property. The mother can take over the management and act, in fact, as the head of the family.

Example:

- At Mohoriya, a woman of 47 years with a strong personality had lost her husband in 1957. He was then aged 61 years. She has four sons, aged respectively 34, 27, 24 and 19 years, all soldiers in India or Burma [Malaya?] and an unmarried daughter aged 17 years. The three eldest sons are married. No division has yet taken place and nothing indicates that it will be done quickly. The sons, being absent, prefer that the paternal landholding continue to be exploited by their mother who is the most capable of making it productive. Furthermore, two daughters-in-law are abroad living with their husbands.

When a husband dies, if his wife is still young it is likely that she will remarry. If she has had children by her first marriage, it is difficult for her to keep them with her, especially if she remarries into another village. When they are little, the children are often entrusted to a sister who has none, then, much later, to an agnate of the children who has no offspring either.

Example:

- A woman of Mohoriya has two sons. Her husband died. She remarried within the village. Her husband's sister, who has married into another house and who did not have a child, is bringing up the two little

boys. The husband of this sister cultivates the fields belonging to these two young children and has the usufruct until the boys are of an age to become independent.

CHAPTER XII

FUNERALS AND KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

A. - FUNERALS AND KINSHIP.

Although a marriage takes place with only a very simple ceremony in which religious rites are almost completely absent, funerals assume exceptional importance in the eyes of the Gurungs. The lama, *pucu*, and *klihbrī* priests must be invited. All the relatives of the dead person, by blood or marriage, participate. A great crowd of villagers attend the ceremony.

The religious rite is very long and very complex. We will not study it here, as a detailed description is not relevant to this chapter (cf. pp. 362 *sq.*). We will only indicate the general outline which will allow us to define the role of the relatives of the dead person in this ceremony and, at the same time, to state precisely the organisation of kinship among the Gurungs.

Funerals spread over two occasions. Immediately after death the burial or cremation of the body takes place. Then, theoretically within the forty-nine days which follow the death, the ceremony called the *pae* is celebrated, the end of mourning, during which the soul of the dead person is led towards the land of the dead. In what follows I will describe the funeral of a married man.

I. - Funerals (burial or cremation).

After having been washed, the corpse is placed on a stretcher. The *tah-kral* makes the *a-lā*, a long pole at the end of which are attached flowers and clothes indicating the sex of the dead person. Then this *a-lā* is fixed vertically to the roof of the house of mourning. The *tah-kral* is

a man of the same lineage as the deceased, who has lost his father or mother. He can be the son of the dead man in the absence of another man [96]. The corpse is covered with a white cloth, the *a-śyō-tala* [*a-śyō-koṭ* (Tamu-kyui)] (*a-śyō*: wife's brother; *tal(a)*: cloth, piece of material), which has been given by a brother of the wife of the dead man. During these preparations, the priest is invited to do the burial ritual. Then the corpse is carried to the cemetery, accompanied by the *tah-kral* carrying the *a-lā*, the priest, the son-in-law of the dead man, the agnates of the deceased and their family, and the widow. According to the wishes of the dead person or of his family, the corpse is buried or cremated (cremation rarely takes place because it is costly). The son-in-law of the dead man, the *moh*, digs the grave. The *tah-kral* then takes a little piece of the *a-śyō-tala* and burns it near the mouth of the dead man close to which he puts a conch shell containing water. Then, the water and burnt cloth are placed on the stretcher beside the dead man. All the company then return to the village. Only, the *moh*, or in his absence a man who is related to the dead man by kinship but is not of his clan, remains near the corpse with several men from the village. The corpse is undressed and buried or cremated. The *moh* receives the *a-śyō-tala* when the ceremony is over.

At the moment of death, the wife of the dead man has broken her glass bracelets, turned her clothes inside out, and unplaited her hair. At the death of a married woman, her husband uncovers his head. The following day or the second day after death, the spouse in mourning goes to wash her hair at the fountain. During the three nights following the death it is the custom for the inhabitants of the village to come and sit on the gallery of the dead person's house and to spend time there talking and singing "to express their sympathy for the unhappy family" [1]. On the third day, the agnates and the family of the dead person go to put food near the cemetery. Until then, the soul was in the house where the deceased had lived. Now, it goes to wander around the village while waiting to be conducted to the land of the dead, at the time of the *pae*.

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[1] Cf. L. M. SCHRAM, "The Monguors of the Kansu", *Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc.*, New Series, vol. 47, Part I, 1957, p. 145.

2. - End of mourning or *pae*

In principal, the *pae* takes place in the forty-nine days following the death. In fact, as this ceremony is very costly, it is most often celebrated much later. It lasts for two or three days. Many relatives of the dead person living in other villages in the valley come to take part.

As at funerals, the *tah-kral* prepares the *a-lā* which is attached to the roof of the house [97]. Then the *moh* (son-in-law) sets up the *plah* which is made of a light framework of wood covered with male or female clothing. The *plah* represents the dead person. During the ceremony, the soul of the latter will come into the *plah*, and, from there, the priest will lead it towards the land of the dead. (In Gurung, *plah* usually means "soul"; in tib., *bla*: spirit, life; cf. Jäschke's *Dictionary*, p. 383). As for funerals, the *a-śyō-tala* is given by the brother of the widow of the deceased; here, it is attached to the *plah*. Food, drink, and cigarettes are brought on large leaves and put round the *plah*. These gifts are offered by the agnates of the dead person and their family, and from relatives by marriage.

Among all the rites of the *pae* done by the *pucu* or the *klihbrť*, there is one which is particularly relevant here, that is *rhil-kahe-ba*. It can only be done if the *a-śyō* or the *ṅe* kin (those who have given wives to the lineage of Ego) have given a small quantity of fermented millet for making grain alcohol (*a-śyō-pa*), and rice flour (*a-śyō-kať*). With these grains and the flour, the priests models some statuettes. Each of these statuettes represents a family (father, mother, children) participating in mourning, to wit: that of the wife's brother, that of the maternal uncle and those of the agnates of the deceased. This ceremony takes place in complete silence, the heads of the different families represented being seated around the priest officiating. He pushes over the statuettes one by one, after having asked of the dead person each time whether he is satisfied with what each family has given during the funeral. If a statuette falls "badly", this signifies that the dead man is not satisfied with the share (this is how the informants expressed it) that the family that it represented has given. This is a bad sign for that family.

Towards the end of the *pae*, the son of the deceased (or the *tah-kral*) fires two arrows up into the sky to frighten away the evil spirits which disturb the progress of the soul to the land of the dead. Then the relatives of the dead person, men and women, sing while turning in an

anti-clockwise direction with the priest around the *plah*, on the terrace of the house. They "accompany" the soul of the dead person on the road which leads towards the land of the dead; at that time the women have their hair undone. Then they "leave" the soul and "return" to the village, turning in the opposite direction, the women plaiting their hair. Mourning is ended. The *plah* is destroyed. The *a-śyō-koṭ* (the white cloth offered by the *a-śyō*) is given to the *moh* and the son of the dead person often shaves his head, a rite which one encounters in India.

3. - Comment.

The prestations at funerals are offered to the dead person himself. It is he whom one wishes to satisfy, to honour directly. Naturally, the gifts given by all the relatives tend to affirm the ties which unite them, although they are directed towards the deceased. The widow or widower with their children are considered to be the people most deeply touched by grief. On a number of occasions, they are called to participate in the rites celebrated by the priest. There they have an active role in relation to the dead person. The *pucu* or the *klihbrṭ* serves as the intermediary between them, the living, and the dead.

The family founded by the dead man, that of his father and his agnatic kin are represented by the *tah-kral*, *tah* comprising all the paternal kin of the dead man, his agnates. The *tah-kral* is of the same generation as the son of the deceased. He can be the son himself, and in this case, the eldest is chosen for preference. He constructs the *a-lā* which is fixed to the roof of the house "to show the grief of the family", as the Gurungs say. He also goes in front of the procession, directing it towards the cemetery and carrying the *a-lā*. Finally, he brings a small piece of the *a-śyō-tala* which has been burnt and a little water to the mouth of the deceased, before the latter is buried.

I think that it is important to stress the fact that, in general, the *tah-kral* is not the son of the deceased. One can say that he leads the mourning, but he does not uniquely represent the family founded by the dead man. He represents the lineage of the deceased and it is for this reason that he is often chosen from a collateral branch of the family of the deceased. His role is detached. He carries out his work as a son,

classificatory or real, in respect to one the elders of his father's generation. He does not receive anything for his participation in the funeral.

We have said that at several times symbolic presents of food are brought by the *tah* families of the deceased. These presents are not necessary in order that the ritual can be accomplished. The donors believe that they honour and please the soul of the dead person and that therefore he will not attempt to come and trouble them in the shape of a wandering spirit (*mõh*) to express his discontent stirred up by their lack of feeling. The priest tells the soul of the deceased the name of the heads of the families who have brought him presents of food, but each family is free to give or not to give. The food offerings are later consumed by the officiating priests or by the guests of the family in mourning. (These guests can have no relation of kinship with the family).

The prestations of the maternal kin and of the relatives through marriage of the deceased are very different in character; they are necessary. Without these prestations, the funeral cannot take place and the *pucu* or the *klihbrť* cannot officiate. The ceremony is meaningless and the soul cannot go to rejoin the souls of his ancestors in the land of the dead. He wanders among men and torments them. In the course of the *pae*, the priest tells the history of *Lemku* whose soul had to wait for a long while before finding rest because the *pae* had been done without the necessary prestations having been given. Thus it is impossible here to disassociate the religious from the social.

Who are the individuals or families who take part at funerals? Here is a list of their names (fig. 26, a):

- the deceased;
- the wife's brother: *a-śyõ*;
- the son-in-law of the deceased: *moh*;
- the kin of the lineage of the deceased: *tah* (or better *tah-mai*: plural of *tah*);
- the relatives of the mother of the deceased (maternal uncle); and those of the wife of the deceased are jointly termed: *ńe* (or *ńe-mai*). If the spouse of the deceased is the daughter of his maternal uncle, all the *ńe* kin belong to the same lineage (fig. 26, b).

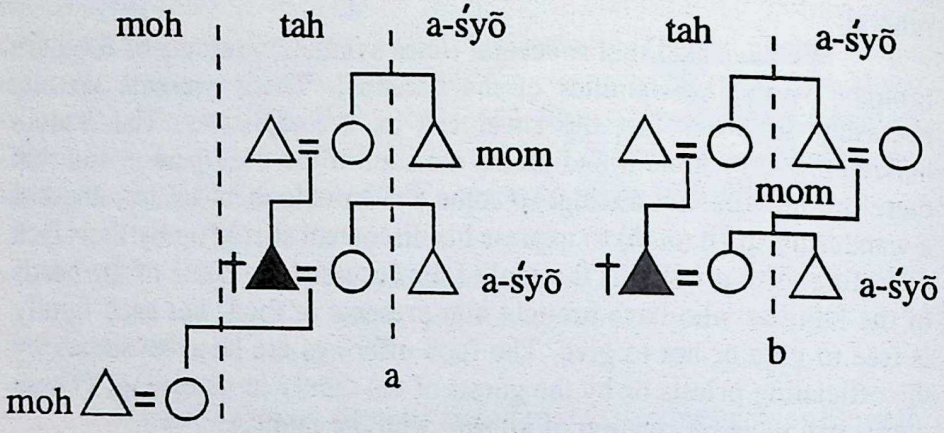

Figure 26 - Kin participating at funerals.

The *a-syõ* gives the *a-syõ-koṭ* or the *a-śyõ-tala*, the *a-śyõ-kaṭ*, and the *a-syo-pa* without which the funeral cannot be celebrated. If, at the burial, the *a-śyõ* cannot provide the *a-syõ-tala*, another *ṅe* relative (generally the maternal uncle) can give it. The *a-śyõ* will give him an identical *tala* as soon as he can.

In general, if the dead person was unmarried, his burial is accompanied by a much reduced rite, and the *pae* is not done. Yet the *pae* is the fundamental ceremony of mourning. Not only is it indispensable to the well-being of the dead man, it also unites all the relatives of the deceased and expresses the relationship between them. This reunion can only take on its full meaning if the deceased was married. As we have already seen, the Gurung only attains his full status when married.

However, one of the histories of the *pucu* and of the *klihbrṭ* describes the *pae* of *Lemku* who was not married. His maternal uncle played the role of *a-śyõ* and the couple, his maternal uncle and maternal aunt, are called *a-śyõ a-ṅi*. But *a-śyõ* can mean "wife's brother", and *a-ṅi*, "wife of the maternal uncle" ("maternal uncle" is called *mom*). This example shows us clearly the role played here by the maternal uncle who replaces the *a-śyõ*. Even if the wife's brother is not the son of the maternal uncle, they are both linked to the lineage of Ego by the same

affinal relationship, at two successive generations. Each has given a wife to the lineage of Ego. The maternal uncle has given his sister to the father of Ego, the *a-śyõ* has given his sister to Ego. These are the two relatives of the dead man who give during the funeral ceremony and receive nothing in return. Furthermore, it seems that the donors have a tendency to be members of the superior generation, or at least, to the kin older than Ego. We have already indicated the case of the story citing the *a-śyõ a-ṅi*, the *a-śyõ* there being confused with the maternal uncle. On the other hand, it is worth noting in passing that the prefix *a* occurs in all the kinship terms indicating people older than Ego. But the wife's brother may, in fact, be younger than Ego. However, he is called *a-śyõ* and in the same way he is classified among those older than Ego.

After the role of the *tah* kin (the agnates of the deceased), and those of the *ṅe* and *a-śyõ*, let us look at the role of the *moh*, the son-in-law of the dead man. The *moh* does not give anything. He is, in a certain sense, the specialised layman who helps the officiating priest: he digs the grave (or helps with the digging), he undresses and buries the dead man, he makes the *plah* into which the soul of the dead man comes to stay during the *pae*, and he slaughters two sheep or goats during the *pae* of the *klihbrĩ* priests.

How can this very special role of the *moh* be interpreted? I do not think that it is necessary to consider it as the role of a person of inferior status, in which case Gurung marriage would appear to be hypogamous. At most we have noted a slight touch of hypogamy when we discussed marriage. For a Gurung, digging a grave and burying a dead person are not tasks reserved for men of inferior status. The Gurungs alone bury their dead. If the *moh* is not there, it does not matter which member of the family or of the village replace him in this work. I have twice seen a father dig the grave of his son. Only two short instances in the burial ritual could possibly suggest impurity (I do not know the Gurung word for "pure" and "impure"). After the death of her husband, the wife goes to wash her hair at the fountain. On returning from the cemetery, the family of the deceased briefly clean their hands and feet during the rite of the lama or of the *klihbrĩ* called *tha-sõ* or the *the-ku wa-ba* (cf. p. 369). Another explanation is more likely. The *moh* is a person who has received a daughter. In actively participating in the funeral of his father-in-law, he honours the person who has given him a wife and affirms his attachment to that family. Through the specialist role

which he plays, he expresses the kinship relationship which links him to the dead man without becoming part of the family because of it. The *moh* receives a daughter and he receives the *a-śyō-koṭ* which has been given by the wife's brother. Thus, we can put forward the general idea which emerges from this study of prestations at funerals. Those who have given a daughter, give, he who has received a daughter, receives (fig. 27, a), and acts. In studying kinship terminology, we will need to specify this asymmetry in the two relations of affinity.

What happens if the dead person has not got a daughter? He cannot have a real son-in-law. The *moh* is then preferably the husband of a daughter of an older brother. He can also be the husband of a daughter of a paternal uncle or the husband of a sister. But one always chooses a person who is younger than the dead man. Thus, the *moh* is properly a person who has received a daughter from the lineage of the dead man, to wit, either the actual or classificatory daughter or the sister of the dead man. [98]

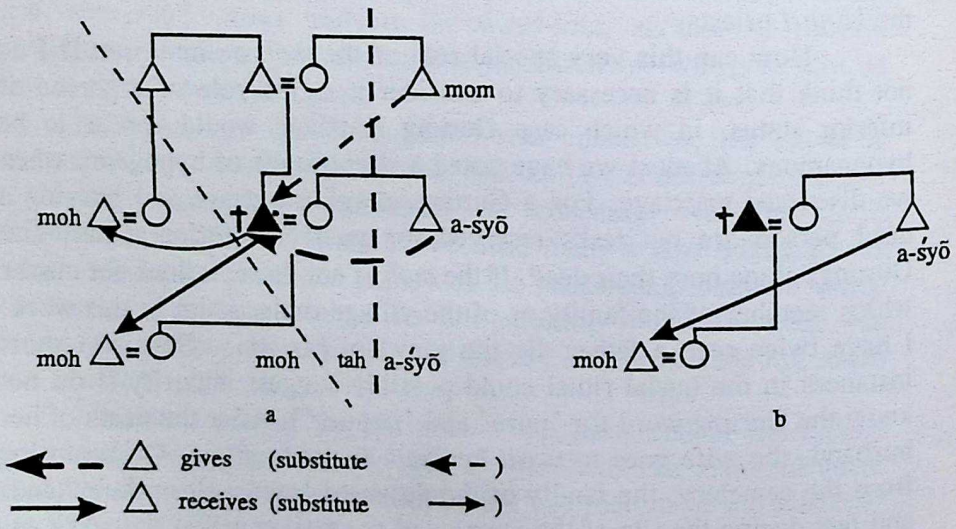

Figure 27 - Direction of prestations at funerals.

Despite the fact that when the *moh* is married to the sister of the dead man, he is of the same generation, I think that the *moh*, as the person who has received a daughter, tends to be of a younger generation. If he is the son-in-law of the dead man, this is obvious. But we have also indicated that, when he has to be chosen in the generation of the dead man, he is always selected from among the youngest relatives of the deceased. We may also add that, unlike *a-śyõ*, *moh* is not preceded by the prefix *a* which is the sign common to terms indicating the generation superior to Ego.

The *a-śyõ-koṭ* is given to the *moh*. That which has been given by the wife's brother is received by the daughter's husband (fig. 27, b).

The generations of those who give and those who receive are different. He who gives is of the superior generation or at least of kin older than Ego, he who receives, belongs to that of the son of the dead man (fig. 27, a) showing clearly, from the point of view of the generations, the asymmetry in direction of the affinal relatives. On the other hand, the gift of the *a-śyõ-koṭ* indicates that it is not directed to the family of the dead man, but to the dead man himself and that it is his property which is given to the *moh*, not that of the family. In the prestations of the funeral, nothing is received or given by the family or lineage of the dead man. In a sense, the deceased acts as the point of articulation for two relations of affinity.

Very often, on the occasion of funerals, one may call on the relatives of a divorced woman or the descendants of an illegitimate child. Divorce between husband and wife or the illegitimacy of a child does not suppress the kinship relationships created by the marriage or the birth.

Example:

- A Carjat girl from Mohoriya had a daughter by a Solahjat boy before marrying with a Carjat from a hamlet called Kluh to the north of Mohoriya. The little illegitimate girl was reared by the family of the Solahjat boy. When the legitimate Carjat husband living at Kluh died, he only had sons and consequently no son-in-law, or *moh*, for his funeral. But the illegitimate daughter of the wife had grown up and had married a Solahjat (she was Solahjat, her father so being). This person was called by the widow to play the role of *moh*, although he was Solahjat and the husband of an illegitimate daughter (fig. 28).

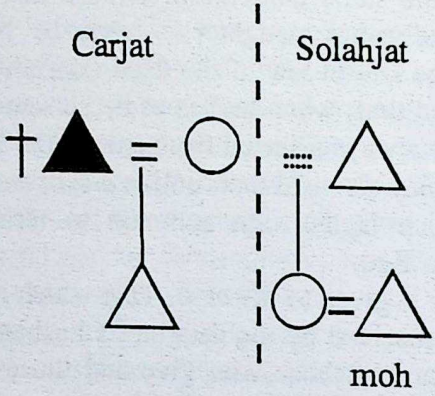

Figure 28

B. - KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY.

Firstly, we must define all the kinship terms, then we will try to interpret the system which they form in the light of the conclusions drawn in the other chapters dealing with social organisation.

I. - Terms.

- *a-pa ('apa)*: father, father's brother, husband of the mother's sister. In the two last senses, (classificatory fathers), one adds to *a-pa* a term indicating the order of birth; *a-pa the-ba* (or *a-p'the-ba*): eldest father; *a-p'mahila*: second father; *a-p'saila*: third father; *a-p'kaila, a-p'rhaila, a-p'thaila....a-p'cyõ*: youngest father. The order of birth of boys is distinct from that of girls. In one family, it is possible to have two eldest (one female and one male) and two youngest (one male and one female). The death of one of the children does not change the order of birth of the younger siblings of the deceased.

- *a-ma*: mother, wife of the father's brother. In this last sense, *a-ma* is followed by a term indicating the order of birth; *a-ma the-ba* (or

a-m'theba): eldest mother; *a-m'mahile*, *a-m'saile*...*a-m'jyõ* (or *a-ma kanśi* or *a-ma kaśi* {F.H.}[2]); youngest mother.

- *a-the*: (*a-m'the-ba* {F.H.}): mother's eldest sister. I think that it is necessary to see in this expression a contraction of *a-m'the-ba* (in agreement with the term {F.H.}) that can be written as an equation: wife of the father's brother = sister of the mother, corresponding to: husband of the mother's sister = father's brother. The other terms of the series "mother's sister", sometimes used in the Modi valley, are:

-- *a-ju mahile* signifying "mother's second sister"...

-- *ćẽ-ju*: mother's youngest sister. Thus there is a break between the first term of the series and the others, due probably to the influence of Nepali.

- *au-mo*: (also *a-mo* {F.H.}) husband of the father's sister (plus order of birth). If it is a woman talking, this term signifies: father-in-law, husband's sister's husband, if he is older than her husband.

- *mom*: mother's brother, father-in-law (plus order of birth). (*maju* {F.H.}).

- *pha-ne*: (*pha* or *pa*: father; †ni- †nei: Tibeto-Burman root signifying father's sister) father's sister, mother-in-law (woman talking) (plus order of birth)....*pha-jyõ*: father's youngest sister.

- *a-ñi*: wife of the mother's brother, mother-in-law (plus order of birth).

- *a-ghẽ*: classificatory eldest brother (own eldest brother; first-born son, older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister). (Cf. in Monguor [3], *aga*: eldest brother).

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[2] Certain variants in terminology have been communicated to me by Prof. von FURER-HAIMENDORF. {Abbreviation: F.H.}

[3] L.M. SCHRAM "The Monguors of the Kansu", *Tr. Am. Phil. Soc.*, vol. 44, 1954, p. 84.

- *a-jyõ*: last-born son, older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister.

- *a-wa mahila, a-wa saila....*: second brother, third... classificatory, older than Ego (own second brother, third... older than Ego; second-born son, third-born..., older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister).

- *a-wa*: classificatory brother, above all used for the brothers older than Ego. Term of reference. (Cf. in Monguor, *awa*: father).

- *thu-gu* or *thu* (*thu-bo*, tib.: chief, used sometimes in the sense of eldest brother):

1. first-born son, younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister;
2. classificatory eldest son.

- *cyõ*:

1. classificatory youngest brother (own youngest brother, last-born son, younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister);
2. classificatory youngest son.

- *mahila, saila...*

1. second brother, third..., classificatory, younger than Ego (own second brother, third..., younger than Ego; second-born son, third-born..., younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister);
2. second son, third... classificatory.

Observation: The complexity of the group of terms for "brother" is caused by having to keep count all the time of the exact order of birth of each person in his group of "proper brothers", and also his relative age in relation to Ego. Take for example the sons of a father's brother, all older than Ego: *a-ghẽ* (first-born), *a-wa mahila* (second-born), *a-wa saila* (third- born), ..., *a-jyõ* (last-born). The combination of two criteria is expressed by a simple prefix (*a, a-wa*) except in the case of the first-born where the terms are radically different.

"Brother" first-born	> Ego	*a-ghẽ*
	< E	*thu-gu* (impossible for proper brother)
"Brother" second-born	> E	*a-wa mahila*
	< E	*mahila*
"Brother" third-born	> E	*a-wa saila*
	< E	*saila*
"Brother" last-born	> E	*a-jyõ* (impossible for proper brother)
	< E	*cyõ*

The terms for "sister" form a group having the same characteristics, the first order being *a-gaẽ*, *a-na mahile*, *a-na saile*, *a-na kanśi*; the second order being *nani* [*nan* (Tamu-kyui)], *mahile*, *saile*... *kanśi* [*ṅi-chyõ* (Tamu-kyui)].

- *a-gaẽ*: classificatory eldest sister (own eldest sister; first-born daughter, older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister).

- *a-na kanśi*: last-born daughter, older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister.

- *a-na mahile*, *a-na saile*...: second sister, third... classificatory, older than Ego (own second, third sister..., older than Ego; second-born daughter, third-born..., older than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister).

- *a-na*: classificatory sister, above all used for sisters older than Ego. Term of reference.

- *nani*:

1. first-born daughter, younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister;
2. classificatory eldest daughter.

- *kanśi*:

1. classificatory youngest daughter (own youngest sister; last-born daughter, younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister);

2. classificatory youngest sister.

- *mahile, saile...* :

1. second sister, third, ... classificatory, younger than Ego (own second or third sister, ..., younger than Ego; second daughter, third-born..., younger than Ego, of a father's brother or a mother's sister);

2. second daughter, third...classificatory.

- *ṅohlõ* (masculine), *ṅohlo-śyo* or *ṅohlon-śyo* (feminine): cross kin of Ego's generation; all persons that can intermarry with Ego.

- *a-śyõ*: wife's brother.

- *moh* (also *mo* {F.H.}): sister's husband, daughter's husband, husband's sister's husband, if he is younger than her husband (Ego feminine), husband of the daughter of the father's brother.

- *ćõ*: [elder] brother's wife, son's wife.[99]

- *koẽ* (or *koĩ*) masculine, *koẽ-mi* (or *koe-mi* or *koi-mi*) feminine: grandson and grand-daughter, son and daughter of the sister (usually a term of reference), great-grand-son and great-granddaughter.

- *ćah*: (masculine), *ćah-me* (feminine): son and daughter (usually a term of reference), consanguineous kin of the generation of Ego's sons.

- *a-ta a-li*: group of brothers older and younger than Ego. Term of reference (*a-ta*: older brothers ; *a-li*: younger brothers).

- *rĩ*: sister. General term of reference used mainly by a man.

- *mayũ mai*: brothers. Term of reference used by sisters.

- *kẽ*: father-in-law. Term of reference.

- *śyo-me* [*śyo-mẽ*] (also *śu-mi* {F.H.}): mother-in-law. Term of reference.

- *bra-ju* (nep. *baje*): grandfather, great-grandfather, father-in-law if he is not at the same time a maternal uncle or husband of the paternal aunt. In general, a term used to address an old person.

- *bhu-ju*: grandmother, great-grandmother, mother-in-law if she is not the paternal aunt or wife of the maternal uncle. In general, a term used to address an old person.

- *hyõ bra-ju* and *hyõ bhu-ju*: great-grandfather and great-grandmother.

- *a-ji khe*, *a-ji ma*: ancestors (masculine and feminine). Little used. (In Newari, one says: *aja* - grandfather, *aji* - grandmother). [100]

2. - Comments.

Certain of the terms listed are altered nepalese terms (e.g. *braju*, *bhuju*). It is the same with the terms added to indicate the order of birth: *mahila*, *saila*... (*mahila* from *madhya*, skrt.). The others are related to Tibeto-Burman terms (e.g. *thu-gu*, *ćah-me*, *ćah*...).

All the terms of address, with the exception of *braju* and *bhuju* (nep.), corresponding to persons older than Ego, are preceded by the particle *a* (the old term, *a-ji khe*, *a-ji ma*: male and female ancestors, also follow this rule).

This observation enables us to draw a first conclusion. Kinship is articulated on one essential pivot, that of age. There are, on the one hand, the relatives who are older than Ego, and on the other, those who are younger than him. This conclusion is confirmed by what we have already noted elsewhere, namely, an attitude of respect observed with regard to all those older than oneself. The particle *a* marks this respect in the language, which determines, to a certain extent, the relations between the elders and their juniors.

The subject never addresses a relative older than himself by his name, but he sometimes uses this name when he talks about him to a third person, in order to avoid using an analytical term. A younger relative is often called by his name. This rule is not accompanied among the Gurungs by injunctions which clearly limit the kinship relations, as is common in Nepalo-Indian societies. We have seen in a preceding chapter that, in the familial relationships of Gurung life, there is no attitude of constant anxiety to reflect the hierarchy of members of the family, nor to avoid intimacy with them.

Note in passing that a wife never says the name of her husband and does not use the term "husband". Most often, she uses the expression "the father of my eldest son". If one asks her the name of her husband, she calls a neighbour and asks her to say the name of the father of her eldest son. The husband, on the other hand, does not feel embarrassed to call his wife by her name. A third person can use the words *pha* "husband" and *mri* "wife" (*ri* or *rĩ*: root meaning, "sister", "woman" in a general sense), *mri* could be a contraction of *ma-ri* (*ma*: mother, corresponding to *pa* or *pha*: father).

The distinction based on age is found in all the generations. Each "father" (*a-pa*) for example, is distinguished from the other "fathers" of Ego by his order of birth, that is to say by his relative age in regard to his brothers. Furthermore, it seems that this distinction has been reinforced under the influence of Nepalo-Indian culture. In fact, the terms *mahila*, *saila* and *kaila* have been borrowed from these peoples. Only the terms for the oldest (*the-ba*, *thu-gu*...) and the youngest (*cyõ*...) are Gurung. In the histories in the ancient language told by the local priests, one does not find any Nepalese terms. The order of birth there is indicated by the expression *koh-ler-bai* which means "he who is below", *the-ba* or *cyõ* serving as end terms. How are we to interpret this profusion of terms of address which tend to specify the age of a person in regard to Ego? It has not been possible for me to find a satisfactory answer. Nevertheless, it is possible that this multiplicity may be linked to the system of prestations of mourning. We may illustrate this hypothesis by considering the *moh*, the son-in-law, whose role in funerals is essential. The *moh* must be chosen from among the youngest *moh* of the dead person. The husband of the sister of the dead person is a "son-in-law", but the wife of the dead person calls this man *moh* or *au-moh* according to whether he is older or younger than her husband. At the

time of the funeral, she has to look (in the absence of a husband of a daughter) to the husband of the sister of the deceased who is younger than her husband, so that the choice may conform to the rule. In a Gurung village, each knows the order of birth of the other and his relative age in regard to the latter.

The equations: father's brother = father = mother's sister's husband; mother's sister = mother = father's brother's wife; son or daughter of the father's brother = brother or sister = son or daughter of the mother's sister - accord with the prohibition on marriage between Ego and his parallel cousins who are his brothers and sisters, the parents of these being his fathers and mothers.

Whereas parallel kin, on the mother's side and on the father's, are confused, it is not the same with cross kin.

- *au-mo*, father's sister's husband, is not the same as *mom*: mother's brother.

- *pha-ne*, father's sister, is not the same as *a-ṅi*: mother's brother's wife.

Yet note the existence of the root *mo*, *mom*, common to the two first terms and of the root *ne* or *ṅi*, common to the last two (the root †*ni*, †*nei*, is Tibeto-Burman and means "father's sister"). Nevertheless, these resemblances are too vague to give substance to a conclusion that *au-mo* = *mom* and *pha-ne* = *a-ṅi*.

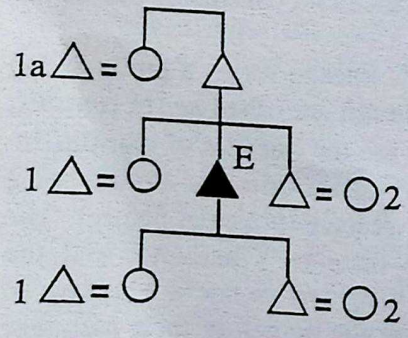
The local descent group or Ego's lineage forms a group of *tah* kin. The lineages which give wives to the *tah* are called *ṅe*. In contrast, those which receive wives from the *tah* are the lineages of the sons-in-law (*moh* or *mo*). The father's sister's husband is called *au-mo* (*au* being no doubt a variant of the prefix *a* which we have spoken of before). The sister's husband, the father's brother's daughter's husband, and the daughter's husband are all *moh*, the daughters-in-law are called *ćõ* (brother's wife, son's wife) and belong to the *ṅe* before their marriage (fig. 26, a).

I think that it is necessary to see the distinction between cross kin, on the paternal side and on the maternal, with the fact that the Gurungs differentiate the *ṅe* and *moh* kin in regard to the *tah*. These distinctions accord with the general schema of kinship which we have tried to disentangle when studying prestations at funerals, a schema in

which it appears that the cross kin on the paternal side belong to the lineages (or local descent groups) which receive a daughter from the lineage of Ego, whilst the cross kin on the maternal side belong to the groups which give daughters to that lineage.

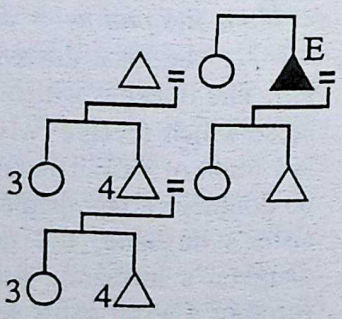
In addition, the terminology shows that two kin of different generations in regard to the subject are, in certain cases, called by the same term (fig. 29, a). Structurally, this assimilation can be understood as a way of disregarding the difference of generations in order to clearly distinguish the one from the other two elements of the lineage linked by intermarriage. In societies favouring matrilateral marriage, the assimilation is frequent and has the following characteristics: the kin who give a daughter to the lineage of Ego are assimilated into the higher generation, whilst the kin who receive a daughter of the lineage of Ego are assimilated into the lower generation. In studying the prestations at Gurung funerals, we have shown evidence of this type.

The equation: sister's son (or daughter) = daughter's son (or daughter) reveals the same tendency to disregard the difference in generation and to harmonise them with the part of the system based on cross-cousin marriage on the maternal side (fig. 29, b).



1. moh (1a. au-mo) 2. ćõ

a



3. koẽ 4. koẽ-mi

b

Figure 29 - Equations of Kinship.

The terms for "father-in-law" and "mother-in-law" pose a problem which it is difficult to resolve. If the father-in-law and the mother-in-law were not linked by kinship with the lineage of a male or female Ego before the marriage, he or she would call the parents-in-law *braju* and *bhuju*, "grandfather and grandmother", or more accurately "old person", as these two terms are used for all of Ego's kin above the generation of the father. Moreover, the subject uses the same terms before his marriage if his lineage is not linked by marriage to that of his parents-in-law. Marriage does not change the terms of address. In contrast, if they are linked by kinship (in the case of the marriage of Ego with the daughter of his maternal uncle), a male Ego calls his parents-in-law "maternal uncle" and "wife of maternal uncle", and a female Ego, "husband of paternal aunt" and "paternal aunt". These terms are reversed if the marriage is made with the daughter of a paternal aunt. In fact, the latter use is very rare since marriage with the daughter of a paternal aunt is not frequent.

The terms of address used by the parents-in-law verify what we have said in a preceding chapter, namely, that marriage is bilateral, in the sense that one can marry a matrilateral or patrilateral cross cousin. But, in fact, the latter type of marriage is very rare and does not accord well with the mass of the terminology.

The terms of reference for "father-in-law" and "mother-in-law" are respectively *kẽ* and *śyo-mi* (or *śyo-me*). I think that *ke* must be close to the Tibeto-Burman root †*k'u*, "mother's brother"; *śyo-mi* can be broken down into *śyo* and *mi*. *Me* or *mi* indicates the feminine in the terms *koĩ-mi*, "small girl", *ćah-mi* "daughter"; *śyo* is found in *a-śyõ* "wife's brother". *śyo-kaĩ* is the food offering given by the *a-śyõ* (and also by the maternal uncle and his wife) during the *pae*. We have also indicated in regard to funerals that one of the histories told by the *pucu* relates the death and the *pae* of *Lemku*, whose maternal uncle is referred to by the term *a-śyõ*. Taken together, these examples tend to prove that *kẽ* and *śyo-mi* in the past have had the double meaning of "father-in-law" and "mother-in-law" and "maternal uncle" and "wife of the maternal uncle", all of which is natural in a society where matrilateral marriage is predominant.

Gurung terminology is very meagre for the generations of grandparents, great grandparents, grandchildren and great grandchildren. The feminine term is only a feminine form of the masculine term, e.g.

koẽ, *koẽ-mi* for "grandchildren". This simplification of terminology is explained by the fact that in these generations, the distinction between *tah*, *ṅe*, and *moh* ceases to play a part.

In Ego's generation, the Gurungs distinguish between immediate kin and distant kin. *ṅohlõ* signifies not only an immediate cross cousin, "mother's brother's son" or "father's sister's daughter", but also "a person who could be a relative through marriage to Ego". A young Carjat of the *kon* clan will call a *lama* or *plon* boy of his generation "*ṅohlõ*" without being able to say precisely to what degree they are cousins. This use of the term "*ṅohlõ*" is very understandable since the four Carjat clans are linked by a network of marriages so dense that each member of a clan A, for example, is the cross cousin or distantly related by marriage to the members of clans B and C. The same remark is true for the Solahjat.

Before the marriage had occurred, the *a-śyõ*, wife's brother, and the *moh* sister's husband, may have been called *ṅohlõ* by Ego, particularly if they were immediate cross cousins. But the type of marriage specifies the relationship: the *ṅohlõ* becomes either a "son-in-law" (*moh*), he who has received a wife from the lineage of the subject, or an *a-śyõ* (who is a *ṅe* of the generation of Ego), he who has given a daughter to the lineage of the subject. The feminine form of *ṅohlõ* is *ṅohlon-śyo*. The wife's sister, who may be an immediate cousin on the mother's side (*ṅohlon-śyo*), is called "sister" by Ego, which is theoretically irregular since Ego may also marry his wife's sister, either after her death, or by becoming bigamous. The Gurungs explain the use of this term of address by the closeness of kinship.

THIRD PART

RELIGION

CHAPTER XIII

RELIGIOUS FRAMEWORK

A. - EVERYDAY LIFE AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

The world of the highland Gurungs is peopled with gods and good and evil spirits. These latter are innumerable and do not cease to torment man. To get an idea of the everyday connections between the human and the supernatural, let us follow the activities of a Gurung family during a day.

In the morning, from sunrise, the women go to the spring to fetch water in large copper pitchers. They also replenish the water in a small silver vase [*ankhora*] (resembling a Tibetan vase for pure water). They put this on a shelf in the house, behind the fire, and change the water every day. This shelf represents a sort of family "altar" or at least a place reserved for objects used in the worship of the god who protects the house. The Gurungs say *pramesar* [*k-hhlyesondi* (Chon-kyui, the language of the *pe*)] (Nep. *parmesur*, *parameśvar*) or *kul deota* [*phai-lu* (Chon-kyui)] (god of the "family", Nep.) to refer to this god who has no particular name. The mistress of the house waters a wild bush near the house where the *nāga* [*bh-huri* (Tamu-kyui)], the snake, which protects the family and its land, is supposed to live.

At the spring one discusses the dreams of the preceding night. One interprets them. Later, if need be, one goes to the local *pucu* priest to ask the meaning. That which a person sees in a dream is that which one of his nine souls sees during sleep when it temporarily leaves the body. If, in a dream, one sees a tree which falls, a landslide, a tooth which is pulled out, hair which one cuts, this is a bad sign for the family; someone is in danger of death. If a wife dreams that she has broken her bracelets, it is a bad omen for her husband. If one sees an animal bite a person, it is a sign of illness.

If, on the contrary, one dreams that someone asks you for your clothes or shoes, this is a good sign; similarly, when one sees milk, a pond, or a person bringing water - money is soon going to flow into the house. If one dreams of a man climbing a tree, this means that a soldier in the family is going to be promoted to a superior rank. If one dreams of a dead man, this means that the hunting will be good.

When the time comes for transplanting rice or millet, or when the harvest-time is come, the master of the house often consults a horoscope which has been drawn up for him by a brahmin to know which day he must start the agricultural operation (*din la-ba*: word for word "make the day"). When he gets to the fields, he makes a small altar with some stones on which he sacrifices a chicken. Then he offers up milk and cow dung in honour of the god *Namru*.[101]

If when going to his fields, a peasant goes in front of one of the two or three large rocks where a spirit lives, he will throw a flower to it. If he is going towards the east, he will salute the rising sun. It is a bad sign if, when walking, a villager sees a snake eating a frog or toad, if he hears a hen crowing like a cock, if he sees a branch which has twisted itself into a knot, a bird which meets a deer, the dried up body of a deer, or if he only hears a stag bellow once. On the other hand, if he sees a bird called a *siñar* hollowing out its nest in the trunk of a tree (by pecking like a woodpecker), this is a good sign.

In the month of Sawan (July-August), our villagers do not go and get wood from the forest for that would bring them bad luck. Once a week, they give nothing to other people and do not pay for what they buy, so as to keep prosperity in their house. But, the following day, they pay their debts. During the daytime, travellers from far off come through the village. In winter, the wandering Tibetan monks come to beg. One never refuses them alms because they could unleash evil spirits. One

fears their impatience or discontent. (They would then begin to kick with their feet). During the summer, the *sādhu* come from the Indian plains and often stop for a night in the village. One gives them a bit of food.

If someone in the family is ill and the master of the house knows a *mantra* [*ṅo*] (a magic formula), he tries to cure the illness himself. He leans over and, reciting the mantra, blows (*ṅho-ba*) on the sore place. But it is mainly in the evening that the spirits break loose under cover of night. Certain places in the village are in the hands of the spirits. In Mohoriya, the area of the cemetery, a thicket of bamboo above the village and a wood below are inhabited by evil spirits.

Example:

- During my stay at Mohoriya there was a sleep-walker. One evening, when I was sitting with the villagers at the crossroads in the middle of the village, this sleep-walker rushed up as fast as his legs could carry him. After having got his breath back, he cried out in a trembling voice: "I woke myself up when falling into the bamboo thicket. I was hearing dreadful noises, it was the sound of spirits. Then I ran and ran, and here I am... I have been lucky to come out of it alive".

In one or two houses of the village, a *pucu*, a lama or a *klihbrī* wrestle against the unlucky spirits which have made a man ill. The onlookers chat without taking any notice of the priest. One jokes and comments on the day's happenings. From time to time, the priest gives an order and a member of the group will get up and do it. The ceremony lasts until one or two o'clock in the morning. Some villagers fall asleep rolled up in their cotton shawls. Others, after having drunk grain alcohol, dream drowsily, whilst in the silence of the mountain the priest's drum sounds periodically.

B. - THE PRIESTS.

In the preceding passage we have begun briefly to penetrate into the supernatural world of the Gurungs, a world where chaos reigns, religious and magical practices intermingle, and Hindu, Buddhist and local rites overlap. To clarify this picture a bit, it seems necessary to

specify the various religious leanings by describing the priests of the religious organisations which co-exist in the Gurung country. I use the word "priest" in a very general sense. The priest belongs to a religious organisation which has given him his knowledge. He carries out his function during the whole of his life and his role is clearly delimited. Four types of priests, each representing a different belief, come together in the Gurung country: the lama, the *pucu*, the *klihbrť*, and the brahmin. Besides these priests, initiates from well established beliefs, there is also the *dhame* who can become possessed and go into a trance on certain occasions.

I. - The lama.

The lama is the priest of the Tibetan Buddhist religion. In the west of the Gurung country, he always belongs to the Carjat clan *lama*. This fact does not seem to be general (cf. p. 168), though this is not surprising as, according to the lamaist belief, every man can become a priest. A Gurung lama is one who is commonly called a "village lama". He does not dedicate all his time to performing his religious duties, lives with his family and does not respect the monk's rule of celibacy. He founds a household and tills his land. If he is sufficiently rich, he constructs small premises by the side of his house where he arranges his sacred books, hangs a religious painting (*thaṅ-ka*) and decorates a small altar with flowers, basins of water, and a butter lamp. There, he can concentrate his thoughts, meditate in peace and solitude and celebrate certain Buddhist rites.

In the villages where lamas live, they are very often asked by the people to officiate. Their prestige is great and their religious influence indisputable. At Ghandrung, for example, there are five lamas. Among the lay people, some forty widows live a retired existence, each day fulfilling their religious duties, and endeavouring to help sick villagers or those in need. Some of them shave off their hair, but none can be compared to nuns (*a-ne*; tib., *a-ni*) who live in the Tibetan monasteries. Their knowledge of religion is very superficial as they do not know how to read Tibetan. In other villages, contact with the Buddhist religion is less common. During the dead season, in winter, the lama will go and visit these villages and stop for several days in each.

The lama acquires his knowledge either from his father, if the latter is a priest, or from being close to a lama of repute. When a child from the *lama* clan shows a disposition to study, and if he expresses the desire to become a lama, his family and the priests of his lineage get together to decide if this child should be a lama.

The following is an example of a lama of Ghandrung (at Mohoriya there wasn't one). He began studying at the age of nine with an old lama. When the latter was called to officiate, he would go with him. During the day, he would work in the fields of his "guru", his master. When he had a deeper knowledge of Tibetan texts which he had learnt to read, he was sent into the mountain to live there alone and to meditate for three months. From time to time, his family would bring him provisions. He was not allowed to light a fire and in consequence to heat his meal. Only one small butter lamp burnt beside a *thaṅ-ka*. His "guru" would come to see him and give him subjects for meditation and study, and then questioned him afterwards on these. Later, the master made him take a final examination and decided that his pupil was capable of doing all the rites which he had to know, on his own. From that date, he returned to the village and became a lama priest. Two of the lamas in Ghandrung have studied in Tibet. One has even been to Lhasa. The books used are bought in Tibet or in the Mustang region.

The lamas seem to have a fairly good if not complete knowledge of Tibetan ritual. Most of the monastic rites are never done. Nevertheless, sometimes several lamas get together in a *gom-pa* (*dgon-pa*) and celebrate one of these rites. Only those relating to funerals, to the struggle against the evil spirits, and to the prosperity of the house are known. The priests only attach a little importance to the meaning of the texts which they read. For them religion has a mainly practical value.

2. - The pucu. [pa-chyu]

The *pucu* is the priest of one of the two local religions. Some comment must be made on the word "*zhāgri*" which is also used to describe them. Generally, the Gurungs only use it when they are speaking in Nepali. In all the mythical histories of the Gurungs, one finds the word *pucu*, a word which is also used in everyday conversation. Some *zhāgri* live in Kathmandu, in Darjeeling, but they are very different from Gurung priests. In Kathmandu, a *zhāgri* is a man who

goes into a trance and is possessed. The *pucu* never plays this role and none of the myths describe a possession scene. The histories told by the *zhāgri* of Darjeeling or of Kathmandu are in the Nepali language. The drums of the *zhāgri* which I saw at Kathmandu have a handle like those of the Buddhist lamas. The drum of the *pucu* has not got a handle. Lack of precise information concerning these *zhāgri* [1], means that it is not possible to put forward the theory that the *zhāgri* and the *pucu* are the priests of two different beliefs, but I shall use the Gurung word: *pucu* (hereafter :pucu).

The *zhāgri* or pucu is always a Solahjat. He belongs to the *kromzē* or the *lehṅai* (or *lehṅe*) clan [102]. There are four kinds of pucu: the pucus *śyar* and *lo* (pucus of the east and south) who are *kromzē* and pucus *nuh* and *cyõ* (those of the west and north) who are *lehṅai*, the four types of the pucu corresponding to the four cardinal points. In fact, nothing differentiates them. According to my best pucu informant, only the rhythm of the drum accompanying the histories told during ceremonies distinguishes the *kromzē* pucus from the *lehṅai*.

There are more pucus than lamas or *klihbrīs*. At Mohoriya, there are two families of pucu priests. There is neither lama nor *klihbrī* [103]. The pucu is both priest and farmer. Usually, he is fairly poor and does not have a lot of land. His nightly duties often oblige him to sleep during part of the day. In the west of the Gurung country, I only know of two pucus who spend all their time at their priestly duties and as local "doctors". They have a quite extensive knowledge of traditional medicines, can diagnose the more common illnesses and prepare potions, healing creams or, at least, comfort the sick.

From May until October, the religious activities of the pucus and other priests is very much reduced. Work in the fields allows no leisure and keeps the inhabitants away from their village.

A candidate for the priesthood studies under a renowned pucu. He works in the fields of his "guru" to pay for his lodging and follows him in his travels. A minimum of six years of study is necessary. As

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[1] VANSITTART ("Tribes, Clans and Castes of Nepal", *J.A.S. of Bengal*, 1894, p. 234) gives the name "Jhankri" among the names of the Thapa clan of the Magars; cf. the recent article by A. W. MACDONALD, "Notes préliminaires sur quelgues *jhākri* de Muglān", *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, 1962, pp. 107-139.

pucus do not have books, students learn the ritual prayers off by heart. They must know how to recite long histories which tell how the ancestors acted on certain occasions in the struggle against evil spirits hostile to man. These mythical histories (*pe*) outline the ritual which must be celebrated in each case where the priest is called to intervene. J. F. Rock cites, in several of his works on the [1]Na-[2]Khi (of south-west China), histories read by the local priests whose general plan greatly resembles those of the myths of the pucu (see the Bibliography). These myths are told in an ancient Gurung language which is appreciably different from the language spoken now. The grammar has a lot of variants, unknown in the modern language. The pucus themselves do not know the meaning of certain words. Nevertheless, I have noted down all the myths of the pucus and have made a reasonably complete translation, but one which is not perfectly exact (cf. p. *xxx*).

When the student feels himself ready to face his final examination, his guru interrogates him on everything he should know and then decides whether or not in this case to give him the right to be a pucu and to officiate alone. The new pucu then pays a sum of sixty or a hundred rupees to his former master as a sign of gratitude. If he is not rich enough to pay off his debt, he must celebrate his guru's funeral without payment when the latter dies. For his part, the guru often gives the young pucu a drum, the essential instrument of a priest. In giving him a drum, the master transmits to the person he has initiated the power of being able to make the gods and spirits hear.

Traditional paraphernalia of the pucu.

The priest cannot officiate if he is not clothed with certain things which give him the power to communicate with the supernatural:

- *rhalbu* (tib. *ral-bu*; long hair): a slightly pointed cap of coarse, deep chestnut wool from which long braids hang (many of these caps are made on the Tibetan frontier). All the pucus wear a wool turban when they officiate. It is wound round the cap.

- *lahr-phya*: birds' feathers which are put vertically around the head between the cap and the turban.

- *khogrē* (or *khōgrē*: large bird's beak carried under the armpit.

- *tūhśi-mluh*: wide belt usually decorated with shells. In the traditional stories it is described as being covered with the quills of the porcupine (*tūhśī*: porcupine) [2].

- *lahgrē-tharbu*: small bells hung all around the belt, dangling down to the legs and fastened on leather laces fixed to the belt.

- *ṅah* or *ṅahr-do ṅah-śī* (tib., *rṅa*; *rṅa-giṅ*): drum of fifty to eighty centimetres in diameter. A wooden frame of six to nine centimetres in thickness. Goat skin stretched over one side. On the other, a stick across the diameter for holding the instrument. The priest generally holds his *ṅah* in the left hand and hits with the right using a wooden stick, covered with little strips of cloth on the upper end to protect the skin of the drum, and to make the desired sound.

- *sa-phu*: dry, stiff, ovoid shell of a fruit, slightly bigger than a pomegranate. A hole is made in it, into which pheasant or peacock feathers are put.

- *pyom*: a small cup of wood or copper into which offerings of grain alcohol are poured.

- *kaz*: a small cylindrical bottle made of wood with a lid and ornamented with silver decorations in the Tibetan manner. It is filled with grain alcohol which the priest drinks.

- *phrem mala* [3]: a long necklace of small black beads which hangs over the chest (it is not mentioned in the myths).

- *chelē* (tib., *čha-laṅ*): copper cymbals from 30-40 cm. in diameter. (These are not mentioned in the myths).

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[2] In Nepali, a porcupine is *dumsi* (cf. TURNER, p. 315).

[3] *'phreṅ (-ba)*, tib. rosary (cf. JÄSCHKE, p. 360); *mālā*, nep.: rosary (TURNER, p. 505).

- *phurap thaca*: small copper object engraved in the Tibetan manner from which ribbons of white and red cloth hang. In theory the priests adds a new one after each *pae*. (It is not mentioned in the myths).

- *dhupiari* (nep.): small dish of bronze or copper where incense is burnt in honour of the ancestors and the gods (not mentioned in the myths).

The pucu usually sits when he officiates, legs crossed, some of his accessories and offerings of grain placed in front of him. He chants his prayers to various rhythms, accompanied or not by the drum and cymbals according to what he is reciting. The pucu often wears his necklace crossways to recall the *poro*, (or *pro*), a garment which the women wear over their bodice and which is fastened on one shoulder, "because once there was a female *pucu*". She was called *Ri-mai-cyõ*. She had to succeed her father, her brother having refused to become a priest (cf. history of the *pundul* pucu). The androgynous nature of the pucu's costume seems to accord with the tendency which prevails in a number of myths of the religion, where the male and female elements are linked. When I asked a pucu about the strangeness of his dress, he replied: "I must struggle against evil spirits. My dress frightens them because they are not used to seeing a man dressed in this way". We will see later that there is another interpretation. [104]

3. - The klihbrĩ.

The *klihbrĩ* (hereafter: klihbrı) is the priest of another local religion which, in a number of ways, is very close to that of the pucu. The basis of their beliefs is the same. In a Nepali context, the Gurungs called a klihbrĩ *"ghabri"*. Hodgson [4] cites the name in his list of Gurung clans (*guaburi*). *Klihbrı* is also the name for one of the Solahjat clans. It is mainly from this clan that priests are recruited. The *klihbrı* clan is subdivided into the *tu-klihbrĩ* and *ko-klihbrĩ* [5]. According to one informant, klihbrĩ priests can also be found who belong to the *thimzẽ*

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[4] HODGSON, *J.A.S. of Bèngal*, vol. 2, 1833, p. 224.

[5] VANSITTART, *J.A.S. of Bengal*, 1894, pp. 213, 249.

and *murumzẽ* clans. In the upper Modi valley, there are no more than two klihbrĩs. In contrast, in the central regions of Siklis and Lamjung, klihbrĩs are more numerous, especially in the villages where there are no lamas. The headman of Ghalegaõ, an old royal residence, had affirmed that the priests of the *ghale* kings were the klihbrĩs. Nowadays, they are always called to officiate at the funerals of the *ghale*.

Like the lama and the pucu, the klihbrĩ is both a priest and a farmer. Moreover, he prepares medicines based on local herbs, to relieve certain illnesses. A klihbrĩ is chosen and instructed like a pucu. My main klihbrĩ informant studied for nine years at Kõta. No book exists; everything must be learnt by heart. The prayers are similar to those of the pucu but the language used is very different. It is not understood by the priests themselves. Certain elements of phrases are close to modern Gurung are no help in understanding the rest of the narrative as they are not very numerous. The priests say that the language used is an old Gurung dialect. Nevertheless it is very different from the old Gurung of the pucu's narrations. To explain this difference I will try to advance an hypothesis. We have said that the klihbrĩ was the priest of the *ghale* and that these kings seemed to have conquered the rulers of the Gurung people previously installed. This second wave of invaders, coming from the northern slopes of the Himalayas (some legends say from *Labrumahrso* [6]) and having fairly similar traditions to those of the first Gurungs, would gradually have become mixed with the latter, but the language used by the klihbrĩ priests would have survived and would represent nowadays a vestige of the past. The pucus who would have been the priests of the first Gurungs (in very old villages like Kõta there are some pucu lineages amongst their founders) would also have wanted to keep the ancestral language, but this was spoken by the mass of the population, which would explain its considerable resemblance to modern

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[6] *La* : sun(?); *mahr*: gold; *sõ*: country. The meaning of *la* is ambiguous. This word is no longer used in modern Gurung. My two main informants, a pucu and a klihbrĩ, told me that the word *la* means sun and *ñih*, moon. But these two words are, without any doubt, connected to the Tibetan word, *zla*, moon and *ñi*, sun. The meanings are thus reversed. It is not possible for us to discern if this reversal is deliberate or due to the fact that *la* and *ñih* not being used in the current language, the priests, in guessing the meaning of these two words, made a mistake. This has unfortunate results as it prevents us from reaching any definite conclusions.

Gurung. Although I have written down all the myths told by the klihbrīs, it has not been possible for me to translate them to check the summaries which were given to be by informants. It will very likely be difficult in the future to get at the sense by a direct method because the priests of the last generations must have considerably distorted words and phrases since they did not know their meaning.

Traditional paraphernalia of the klihbrī.

The klihbrī only officiates dressed in a special costume. Not having been able to translate the texts of the klihbrīs, I do not know how far the equipment which I have seen corresponds to that dictated by tradition. At first glance, it seems to be strongly influenced by the costume of the Tibetan priests.

- *phae-koī* (*pha*: stomach; *e*: genitive particle; *koī*: clothing): clothing consisting of a skirt coming down to the feet, the waist of which is hidden by the length of a large blouse covering the chest and arms (Tibetan style).

- *orkhẽ*: five pictures of gods worn as a crown round the head.

- *rhalbu*: cap like that of the pucu.

- *kalāko*: carved wooden bird to which are attached ribbons of white and red material. The priest adds one every time he celebrates a *pae*.

- *chelẽ*: copper cymbal of 30-40 cm. in diameter.

- *ṅah*: a drum similar to that of the pucu but with a diameter a little larger.

- *saka* [*sāka*]: conch shell.

- *syõ*: small bell, most often made in Tibet, the handle of which is in the form of *dorje*.

- *mālā*: necklace of small black beads.

- *karme*: small lamp of clarified butter.

- *dhupari*: dish for burning incense.

The klihbrī officiates in the same position as the pucu, but with the difference that he dances at funerals accompanying himself with his drum and cymbals.

4. - The brahmin.

From time to time a brahmin priest travels through a valley in the Gurung country and visits each village. Families who have need of his services call him to their homes. One asks him to write out the horoscope of a newly-born child, or to give his advice about a projected marriage by studying the horoscope of each of the two engaged persons. Sometimes, he is summoned by a family to come specially to celebrate a marriage following a ritual established by the Brahmins for the highland peoples, which differs from true Brahmin ritual. But only well off or rich families use the brahmins. Their services are expensive.

5. - The dhame.

One can find the *dhame* throughout the whole of Nepal. He does not belong to any religious organisation and we cannot classify him in the category of priest. He is a man who can, when he so wishes, go into a trance and be possessed by a deceased dhame ancestor, who reveals to him, for example, the causes of a person's illness and the remedies for obtaining relief. Most of the dhames are Untouchables, Tailors, Blacksmiths, etc. Very rarely are the dhames Gurungs. Therefore, we will not study the beliefs of the dhames in detail.

Example:

- At Kõta there is a dhame who is also a pucu. (But this is exceptional. The religion of the pucu is absolutely foreign to the beliefs of the dhame). After having studied for five years to become a pucu, this

Gurung felt himself one day to be possessed by the Indo-Nepalese goddess, Debi. He was then at Bhirkot (West Province no.4). He suddenly saw a woman with long hair and flowers in her hand. His right shoulder began to tremble, then all his body, and he talked unconsciously, speaking the name of the goddess. (I repeat his words). People lit fires all round him and he stopped trembling. He decided to go to the Tharus, inhabitants of the south of Nepal (western Terai), to Nawalpur, and study the science of the dhames for a year and a half. Then he left to learn among other dhames in the country of the Bhotias living on the Nepalo-Tibetan frontier, to the north of Gorkha.

The Gurungs recognise in the dhames the power to be possessed, to enter into a trance, to show the origin of an illness or the place where an object has been lost. They are mainly thought of as having "extra-sensory perception" which can on occasion be used when the lama, pucu and klihbrī have failed.

The following is an example of possession seen at Mohoriya:

- A small boy aged five years has been very ill for more than three months (apparently he is suffering from chronic dysentery). He is dying. Several times the lamas and the pucus have come to officiate to stop the illness but his health has not in any way improved. A Goldsmith, a dhame, is called. He sits on the gallery of the sick boy's house. In several short phrases, he asks for the help of his gurus, of his ancestors, of "those who have complete knowledge" and offers them several grains of rice. Then his legs begin to shake, his chest lifts rhythmically, his head bends in all directions. Then, in a clipped voice, which is not his ordinary voice, he talks very quickly in a way which is incomprehensible to the onlookers. Suddenly he is silent, trembles violently, and then becomes calm. After several minutes of silence, he announces that the child is condemned because he is possessed by an extremely powerful evil spirit who cannot be controlled, then he adds: "When the small boy and his mother were on a visit four months ago, earlier in the same family, a baby died. The evil spirit who had killed this baby passed into the body of the child who is dying today". Several days later, the boy died.

The dhame is very often called by the Blacksmiths, Tailors, Cobblers, etc., as the lama, pucu and klihbrĩ never officiate in the home of an Untouchable.

C. - THE PLACES OF WORSHIP.

I. - The Cemetery.

To the south of the village of Mohoriya, about 400 metres from the last houses, the cemetery (*tuhrja* [chon-kyui; *chhogon* tamu-kyui]) is hidden in a very steep wood. Several small piles of three or four stones indicate where the graves are. They are usually grouped according to the dead man's lineage. The villagers neither visit nor look after the cemetery. Thick vegetation almost hides its existence. In the upper part, there is a stone hearth for the cremation for those who have expressed the wish to have their bodies burnt. Most often the body is buried lying naked on the ground, the knees bent, the heels against the buttocks. The cemetery is inhabited by the ruling spirit of the place and by other evil spirits. One avoids at any price crossing it at night, but in the daytime, one walks there without fear when leading the buffaloes to pasture.

2. - The Shrine.

To the west of the centre of the village climbs a winding stone stairway which leads to a small wood overhanging the village. There, the village shrine stands. A wall prevents the animals from getting in. The building of the shrine is very simple. It is a shelter, the base of which is 1.50 by 2 metres. Three walls of stone support a small roof of stone slabs, the front being open on the outside. The wall at the base is gashed by a large tree which shades the whole area, the tree and the stone forming a single mass. Although no information explained this fact, it is possible that the tree's existence is connected to that of the shrine but it is impossible to say which of the two is the cause of the other. The site is called Bhañar (also Baguẽ), the name given to the god who protects the village, according to my informants. In one of the histories told by the local pucu priest, I have met two other names of gods who protect

the village. The pucu informant confirmed to me that they were also honoured in the same shrine.

What does one find inside this small shrine? On a sort of stone shelf are placed three erect stones, the tops of which are roughly rounded. In the left corner is a small stone statuette representing an animal with four paws, in a bad state of preservation. Some villagers say that it is a cow, others a bull, others a dog. I have not been able to form any opinion on the subject of this statuette.[105] From the roof beams hang white and red ribbons and two small bells. Two pictures bought in India and representing scenes in Hindu mythology are put against the wall at the bottom. Finally, outside, in front of the open facade of the shrine, a wooden stake is set up, the top end of which is conical. The general effect of the shrine indicates a mixture of Indo-Nepali and local elements. The villagers are very vague in their responses to the questions touching the significance of the whole. Some say frankly that they know nothing and the objects are those which their ancestors have left them.

The ritual celebrated in this shrine is not at all elaborate and consists mainly of sacrificing several animals each year, above all in Chait (April-May) and Katik (October-November). The older men of the village officiate. The worship of Bhaṅar seems to be tied up with the idea of fertility and consequently with the idea of the protection of the village. Although almost all the ceremonies are organised by the village, it sometimes happens that a single family may go and sacrifice a goat or chicken to Bhaṅar to attract the protection of the god particularly on their own house. Five times a year, the villagers from Mohoriya celebrate the cult of a god whose shrine is at the village of Dangsing. This sort of shrine, called *koe*, is only built in villages whose origins are remote. Thus, on the west bank of the Modi, there are only two, one at Ghandrung and the other at Dangsing.[106] The other villages which are relatively more recent join with one of these two settlements to celebrate the *koe* cult which historically seems to be much older than that of Bhaṅar. At Dangsing, the shrine is situated on a small promontory at the eastern edge of the village. It is similar, in its construction and decoration, to that of Bhaṅar, but a small latticed wooden door closes up the front. The god who is the object of this worship is called *Sildo* or *Sildo-naldo*. Five times a year, a klihbrī priest celebrates a rite there with the chanting of prayers and the sacrifice of a fish, a cock, and a wild bird. The headman of the village provides most of the offerings which the priest needs. At

the ceremony which takes place in the month of Jeth, the ritual is intended to beseech Sildo to make the first rains of the monsoon fall as soon as possible. A study of the ritual of the Sildo festival seems to indicate that this ceremony belongs essentially to the Gurung tradition and has not been deeply influenced by the Indo-Nepalese traditions. Certain informants have also assured me that this type of cult (the god is not always called Sildo) only exists in the villages in which the princes who ruled the Gurung country lived before the invasion of the Rajput kings. This fact seems to be verified by the actual distribution of the *koe*. Thus, in the Siklis valley, a number of villages go once a year to Silkis, ancient capital of a *ghale* king, to celebrate the *koe* cult. It could be that this cult may have been associated with the ancient political organisation of Gurung society.

3. - Other places.

In Ghandrung, I have noted the existence of a unique construction in the Modi valley. It is located by the side of the site where the kings of Ghandrung lived, who were, with those of Kaski, Siklis and Lamjung, the most powerful lords of the Gurung country. This edifice at Ghandrung is built at about twenty metres from the ancient princely dwelling. It is like a small pyramid in stone tiers, with four tiers in all. On the third tier from the bottom, a triangular cavity is made, in which flowers are put from time to time. My informants tell me that this stone pyramid was the place of worship of the royal family. It is still very well looked after by the descendants of that family who form a very numerous local section of the *lamechane* lineage, from among whom, even nowadays, six of the seven *krōh* of Ghandrung are recruited. This construction is always a place of worship for that local lineage group.

In conclusion, let it be added that, on the *cautara*, stone platforms where travellers put their loads and sit down to rest at the edge of the path, the Gurungs build *mane*. A *mane* (*mani*, tib.) is roughly in the shape of a cube overlapped by a pyramid with very flattened tiers. This pile of stones varies in height (1.50m. to 2.50m). Usually, it is constructed by a well off family in memory of one of their dead. On a stone slab a phrase in Tibetan is engraved giving the name of the dead person, the date of his death, and preceded by a *mantra "Ọm Maṇipadme Hūṃ"*.[107]

CHAPTER XIV

OFFICIAL RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

In the first place there are the calendar festivals. Several days in a year are holidays; "it is a festival" (*pri-ba*). The date of these days is fixed by the *krõh* who sometimes asks the advice of the pucu and the klihbrı. The evening before the day of the festival, the *katwal* wanders through the village calling out the decision of the headman. In certain cases, it is forbidden for all the villagers to work in the fields during the days of the festival in order to make sure that there is one. I will identify two kinds of festival, family festivals and those of the village.

A. - FAMILY FESTIVALS.

They are almost all borrowed from the Nepalo-Indian calendar and celebrated throughout Nepal. The local pucu and klihbrī priests have nothing to do with them. Each family does the rites which correspond to the festival in his own house. Sometimes the whole village gets together to mark the festival by dancing and playing games.

Before describing these festivals, it is necessary to say that the ritual done by the Gurungs has, most often, only a very remote

connection with the traditional ritual which is observed in the Hindu areas of Nepal or in India. The Gurungs usually do not know the meaning of these festivals and more or less imitate what they have seen done elsewhere. The rites celebrated vary from one village to another, and from one household to another. Sometimes even, the ritual is purely Gurung; only the name of the festival and its date are borrowed from the Hindu tradition. The brief description of these borrowed festivals which I will give will not be compared in detail with those of the corresponding Hindu festivals[1]:

- *Sangrati*[2] takes place on the second day of Sawan (in 1958, the 17th July).

The evening before, the evil spirit (?) *Sangrati* comes to the village bringing sickness. Very often, the villagers work the following day in the fields as in July agricultural operations cannot wait. Early in the evening, nine bundles of different herbs are tied together with *mah*, mountain bamboo. There are nine types of herb: *saki*, *lan-tu pacu*, *cutara pacu*, *prola*, *dyāla*, *prum pacu*, *bhayol*, *phorje*, *pagū mlagō*.

These bundles are burnt on the terrace of each house, after the sacrifice of a cock, the blood of which has run onto the *mah*. Then a bundle of burning straw is circled round the head of each member of the household and one shouts: "*a-ghē Sangrati, hya-do...*" (brother Sangrati, get out).

- *Dasarah* is the big Nepalo-Indian festival which takes place in Katik. It is celebrated both individually and collectively. Agricultural work is suspended for four days. Ten days previously some grains of barley are planted inside the house in a little earth. The young seedlings are worn behind the ear and in the hair during the festival. The house is cleaned from top to bottom. A *tika* of rice and *dahi* is put on the forehead by the head of the family. Then the young people go and visit older people and pay their respects. The latter, in return, give them their blessing. On the morning of the third day, one sacrifices goats, sheep and

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[1] Cf., for example, S.C. DUBE, *Indian Village*, London 1956, pp. 99-108.

[2] This word recalls the Indian name of *saṃkrānti* (skrt. entry of the sun into a new sign of the zodiac) given to some festivals.

chickens. The blood is sprinkled over the tools and utensils which are used to cut, dig, and kill (*ayudhāpūjā*). In the evening, one dances and sings on the terrace of the krõh's house. On the same day, a buffalo bought by the villagers (of Dangsing and of Mohoriya, in the case studied) is sacrificed in front of the altar of these two villages (*koe*). At *Dasarah*, a long dance of a very original character is done [3]. It is called *mahda* (or *soraṭi*, nep.) and is danced during six days in front of the krõh's house. Two young men dress up in women's clothes. Two others in male costume are their partners. A huge circle is formed round them. A narrator starts to sing a long story which gives the theme of the dance, and in which each phrase is repeated by the audience. The songs are accompanied by the *mahdal* (small drum), and the *mohjar* (small cymbal) and the clapping of hands by the audience.

The story tells of the life of the King Jaisingh and Queen Bhimalai in the country of Amina. They had a daughter called Soroti. The brahmin consulted to make her horoscope and to say what the future would be for the child discovered that she would have a brilliant life. She would become very wise and very intelligent. He was alarmed as he saw that already the princess surpassed him with her knowledge. Therefore he told the parents that she would have a miserable life and that she would kill her father and mother. The latter were frightened and locked the child in a gold chest and let it go down a stream. Two fishermen dreamt that night that the next day would be a good one for fishing. All morning, they cast their net and one can imagine their surprise when pulling it in to discover in the mesh a gold chest. "We must share our prize", they said. "I will take the box", said one, whose name was Jaliari, "I will keep what is in it", retorted Kumal, the second fisherman. This they did. One carried away the box and the other the child who was in the box. When Soroti was brought into the fisherman's cottage, it became a palace. The child was fed with yak milk. Later on, as King Jaisingh was hunting, he saw a magnificent house in the woods. He returned there to ask for a drink. A young girl brought him water. Astonished by her beauty, the king asked Soroti's adoptive father for the hand of the young girl. Kumal gave her to him. Many princes came to

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[3] This dance has not been done at Mohoriya for two generations. In the upper Modi valley one can only see it at Ghandrung.

be at the wedding celebrations. It was then that Princess Soroti revealed to King Jaisingh that she was his daughter. The marriage ceremony was annulled and the lying brahmin banished. He went away and settled in the country of Khangara. The king of that country called him to his palace to ask him what would be the fate of the nine queens, his wives. The brahmin told him that all nine would have an unhappy future. He added: "A young happy princess lives near a man called Kumal. You must marry her". The king sent his nephew Bijaibharat to find the princess. After twelve years the nephew found Soroti. "I gave you five years to do this journey", cried the king to Bijaibharat, "and you have been away for twelve years. You must certainly have lived with that princess during all these years. I no longer wish to marry her". Soroti then said to the king that she wanted to go back to her country but the king refused to agree to her request and built her a magnificent palace.

- *Tiwar*[4]: takes place in the month of Katik (October-November) for three days. This festival is also celebrated individually and collectively. Sisters put a *tika* of rice and *dhai* on their brothers' foreheads and brothers give presents to their sisters (money, bracelets, etc.). The whole village enjoys all sorts of games, especially card games. They also organise competitions of skill, and of athleticism (running, throwing the weight etc.).

- *Gairu*[5]: is celebrated in Mangsir (November-December), the night of the first full moon. It is the festival of the animals, and especially of the temporary cow-sheds where the cows and oxen live outside the village. A cock is sacrificed on a small stone altar, set up beside the shed, to satisfy the spirit protector of the animals.

- *Puspandra*: in the evening of the 15th of the month of *Pus* (December-January), the villagers eat rather better than usual.

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[4] Tiwar or Tiwā (celebrated during the new moon) corresponds to the Divali festival in India.

[5] Gairu is, without doubt, a distortion of Gauri (name of Parvati, wife of Civa). But the worship of Gauri, celebrated by Brahmins, only has a very tenuous connection with the fertility of the animals.

- *Magh Sangrati*: (Maha Sankranti in India): takes place in the month of Magh (January-February). One eats *cyura* (small balls of cheese) and *tame* (tubers found in the woods) at the evening meal.

- *Phagun purnim*: (the Indian festival of Holi): takes place in the month of Phagun (February-March), on the day of the full moon. Children throw red powder in people's faces, but the work in the fields is not interrupted.

B. - VILLAGE FESTIVALS (at Mohoriya).

- *Chait Dasarah*: is the festival of the first day of the Nepalese year which begins on the 1st of the month of Chait (March-April). A buffalo is sacrificed at the *koe*. The *kroh* grants a day of rest on this occasion.

- *Tote*: takes place three time on Sundays in the month of Chait (March-April). During these three days of holiday the people endeavour to chase away the evil spirits, carriers of sickness, from the village. When night has fallen, a group of boys between 11 and 16 years sacrifice a chicken and go successively into each Gurung house in the village. One of the boys carries an incense bowl (one burns this incense when one wants to drive out an unlucky spirit). The other children walk through the village making a deafening noise with drums, cymbals, bells, etc. In each house, they wave a bit of chicken, drawing circles around the fire, then dancing in all directions shouting and beating their instruments to chase away the bad spirits who bring sickness. When the tour of the village is finished, they throw the rest of the chicken far away.

The *kroh* uses the *Tote* holiday to get urgent communal work done. This festival is again celebrated three times in the same way in the month of Sawan (July-August). It is at the time of the monsoon. The *krōh* orders one person from every household to clean the walls of the village paths of the luxuriant vegetation which has begun to cover them. If this job is not done, the roots of the plants loosen the stones of the walls and make them collapse. Each family also cleans the walls of the terraces of his fields twice a year for the same reasons.

At *Totẽ*, they make light archways of wood at the main entrances of the villages. On the upper horizontal bar they hang small plaques of grooved wood.

According to my informants, one makes these gateways to show the unlucky spirits that this is where the village begins and they must not go beyond this point. Kawakita has seen similar gateways in the east part of the Gurung country. From some of them a wooden triangle was hung through which a short piece of cylindrical wood was pushed, to which Kawakita attached a symbolic sexual significance. Although I have not visited this region, I do not think that these gateways are permanently set up there as he seems to contend. They must surely be the temporary gateways made for Totẽ. It is not surprising that Kawakita made this observation since he walked through the east of the Gurung country during the period of Totẽ.

- *Bohme puthi-ba*: (*bohme*: brahmin (?); *pu* of *pūjā* (?); *thi-ba*: to find and invite (?)). A goat is sacrificed by the village three times a year in Chait, Bhado and Katik, on the Tuesday nearest to the full moon, at the small shrine of Bhaṅar which overlooks the village. I could not get any precise explanation for this ritual.

- *Sildo thi-ba*: (*sildo* or *sildo-naldo*: name of a divinity; *thi-ba*: to find and invite (?)). We have already had occasion to underline the importance of this festival which does not seem to be derived from any Hindu influence. It is repeated five times a year in Chait, Jeth, Bhado, Asoj and Katik, on the Tuesday nearest to the full moon. The religious ceremony is celebrated by the klihbrī priest in front of the *koe* and the object is to "ask Sildo-naldo to protect the village". The klihbrī models ten cones of rice of which one of the largest symbolises Sildo-naldo. The headman of the village brings three *pathi* of grain for the offering of *cuh* and a *mana* of grain for the offering of *acheta* (intended for the gods and the ancestors). The klihbrī recites successively: *kleh chue-ba*, *me-dā*, *ćōh-dā*, *phai-dā*, *si-dā*, *pra-dā*, *noh-dā*, *tōh-dā*, prayers whose meaning I give later (cf. p. 357), then the priest sacrifices an animal.

This ceremony is celebrated in honour of Sildo-naldo, who my informants thought of as the "god who protects the village". This idea must be clarified. The name Sildo-naldo could be analysed in the following way: *si*: rice, grain (word in the klihbrī vocabulary); *na*: rain;

ldo: form of the verb "to do" (*la-ba*) (?) Sildo-naldo would thus be the divinity who "made the grain and the rain". Although this meaning of the word Sildo-naldo is uncertain, it could be justified as it agrees with the meaning of the ritual as will become apparent in the passage which follows. Note in passing that the Gurungs seem to make a distinction between Sildo-naldo and Namru "protector of the village" but more particularly protector of the flocks, the woods, the high lands, the alpine pastures. I would therefore tentatively suggest that, to a certain extent, Sildo-naldo protects agriculture and the low lands (as opposed to alpine pastures and the woods), whilst Namru protects the raising of animals and high lands where one finds the alpine pastures and the woods.

Let us now place the different festivals of *sildo-thi-ba* against the Gurung's agricultural calendar.

MONTH	AGRICULTURAL CALENDAR	SACRIFICE
1. Chait 15 March- 15 April	First ploughing of Spring.	Fish
2. Jeth 15 May- 15 June	The land is prepared for transplanting of millet and rice which begins after the downfall of the first monsoon rains.	Fish, cock (or goat), *pō-ro* (pheasant)
3. Bhado 15 Aug.- 15 Sept.	Rice and millet finish ripening. Rice is harvested.	Fish
4. Asoj 15 Sept.- 15 Oct.	Millet is harvested, buckwheat and barley sown.	Fish
5. Katik 15 Oct.- 15 Nov.	The harvesting of millet and the sowing of buckwheat and barley is finished. The dead season begins.	Cock

Before giving an interpretation of the *sildo thi-ba* ritual, it is necessary to say a few words about the ceremony in the month of Jeth which is, without doubt, the most significant. It takes place in the days preceding the arrival of the monsoon. The majority of villagers are unoccupied. All the fields are ready for the transplanting of the millet and of rice but it is necessary to wait for the first rain before transplantation can start. The heat is stifling. The headman of the village orders all agricultural work to cease and a member from each household should join a party of beaters who will spread out in the woods surrounding the village with the aim of capturing a live *pō-ro* (a species of pheasant). Work can only start again when the bird has been caught. In 1958, the search went on for four days until it was successful. During ceremony proper, the headman of the village distributes water contained in a big pitcher between all the households of the village so that it can be sprinkled on the fields of each family Before sacrificing the *pō-ro* and the cock, their feathers are burnt "instead of incense". When the ceremony is finished, the headman of the village receives a rice statuette and a foot of the sacrificed *pō-ro*.

The klihbrī brings the grain of the offering of *cuh*. *Sildo thi-ba* appears to be a ceremony during which one invokes, one searches for, and one captures a power which must bring rain and more generally to make the earth fertile. Let us state precisely this interpretation in analysing the rituals of the five ceremonies as a whole.

In the month of Chait, Jeth, Bhado and Asoj a fish is offered to Sildo-naldo. It is necessary to say here that *sildo thi-ba* is the only ceremony celebrated by the klihbrī priests (and pucus) in which a fish plays a role. The fish is absent from all the ancient Gurung myths, which is understandable among a peoples who have for a long time been predominantly shepherds living in the high lands, where the water rarely has fish in it. It is therefore impossible to determine precisely what ritual value the Gurungs place on the offering of fish in *sildo thi-ba*. However, it is probable that the fish has been chosen because it lives in water, and it is water, in the form of rain, that the Gurungs want when they invoke Sildo-naldo [108]. In Chait, the first ploughings and sowings are helped by light spring rain. From Jeth to Asoj, the growing of maize, millet and rice demands a lot of water. It is during this period that the monsoon rains fall. In Katik, the monsoon is finished. The earth no longer needs water. It is as yet sufficiently humid to allow the winter growth of

buckwheat and barley. Also, the offering at the Asoj ceremony is not an offering of fish, but of the blood of a cock. In invoking Sildo-naldo, the Gurungs do not seem to be asking only that he makes the rain fall, they pray to him to restore the earth's fertility and to give them a good harvest. The capture of the *po-ro* during the ceremony in the month of Jeth much resembles the ritual hunts studied by A.W. Macdonald [6]. Nevertheless, the capture of the *po-ro* differs from these in the sense that it does not imply a rite of divination. When the Gurungs come back from the *po-ro* hunt, they do not interpret their momentary success or failure as a good or bad sign forecasting a wet or dry year, or a good or bad harvest. We will see later in the rite of the search and capture of a spirit that it often presents itself in the form of a bird and is very common in the ceremonies celebrated by the klihbrıs and pucus. But when, in these ceremonies, the rite is expressed through the recitation of certain stories (*pe*), in *sildo thi-ba*, in contrast, the search and capture of the spirit is actually realised during the drive.

Note in conclusion that Sildo-naldo, having taken the body of the *pō-ro*, is sacrificed to himself, thus this body representing the power of Sildo-naldo is symbolically divided between the different members of the group. His representative, the headman of the village, receives a foot[7].

- *Nimyo-sā pri-ba* (*nimyo*: rat; *sā*: tooth): it is the day of the "rat's tooth", which takes place on a Tuesday in Sawan (July-August) when the transplanting of the rice and millet has ended. The *krōh* forbids anyone to go to work in the fields. "Those who disobey will soon see their crops attacked and destroyed by rats and other rodents". The order of the *krōh* is strictly observed by the villagers.

- *Ghātu*: this festival takes place during the month of Magh (January-February) (Panchami). It is no longer celebrated in the Modi valley. It was done for the last time at Ghandrung thirteen years ago. Nowadays, the young Gurungs do not know how to do the necessary

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[6] A.W. MACDONALD, "Quelques remarques sur les chasses rituelles de l'Inde du Nord-Est et du Centre", *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, 1955, pp. 101-115.

[7] A. W. MACDONALD, *loc.cit.*, p. 115.

dances for the celebration of this festival. In Lamjung this tradition has been kept[8]. As with the Mahda dance, that of Ghãtu takes place on the terrace of the *krõh*. It lasts for four days. A girl aged about 12 years does it. A narrator tells, phrase by phrase, a long story which is gradually taken up by a chorus accompanied by drums and the audience clapping its hands, gathered in a circle. A series of descriptive dances are done first of all: the dancer carries a plate of rice, then a small vase of water and a basket (*dihkya*); she goes down on a boat from Tirbeni to Baglung on the river Kali situated to the west of the Modi valley; she transplants rice; she goes hunting; she gathers and arranges flowers.

Then the story begins. One day, King Pasaram left on a journey and went to Lawakot, Salunkot, Bhirkot, Grũhkot, Dhurkot, Musikot and Ghalekot. He reached Nandpur where he encountered King Singh of Garwal. He was vanquished and died. A crow carried the sad news to the country of King Pasaram which was called Kyakot. For his part, a poor man brought the turban of her dead husband to Queen Satiwati. At the sight of these two messengers, she was frightened and, having seen a particular sign in the cow's milk, she was convinced that her husband was dead. She ordered that they burn her together with her lord's turban.

This story is told in Nepali. From which historical period might it come? Why is it told on the occasion of the festival of Panchami? The informant could tell me nothing just as when I asked the same questions on the subject of the story narrated during the Mahda dance. Could one see in Ghãtu an anniversary of the defeat and death of a Gurung prince in a battle against foreign invaders? There are not enough facts to confirm this. But this story is none the less interesting. It shows how the Gurungs sometimes make use of the Nepalo-Indian traditions. They tell us here of the death of a queen who wished to follow her husband into death according to the Hindu custom (sati). But I have never heard of such a custom existing in the Gurung country in the last hundred years. It is even probable that it has never been. [APPENDIX D]

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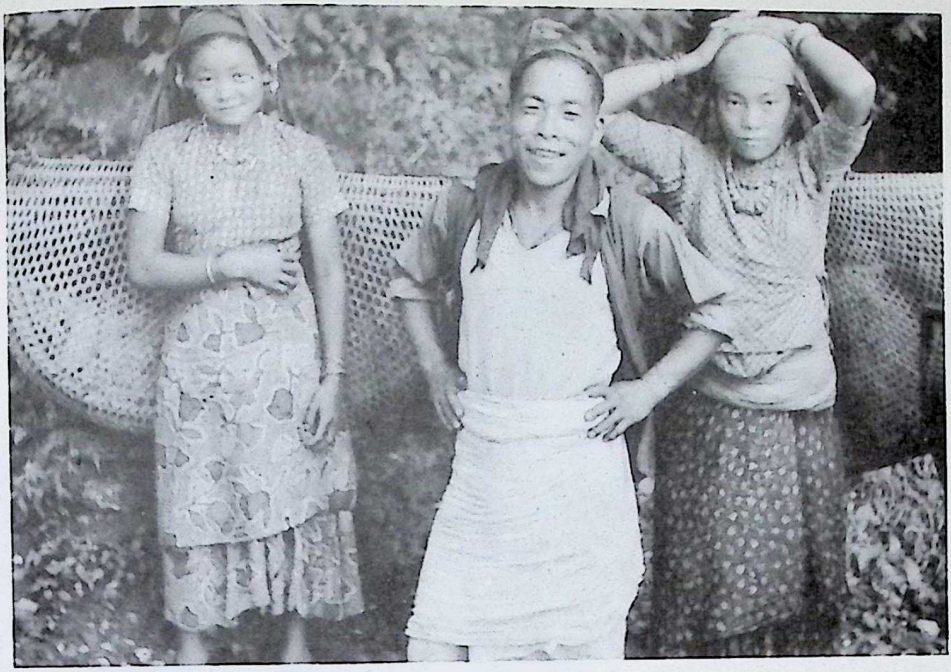
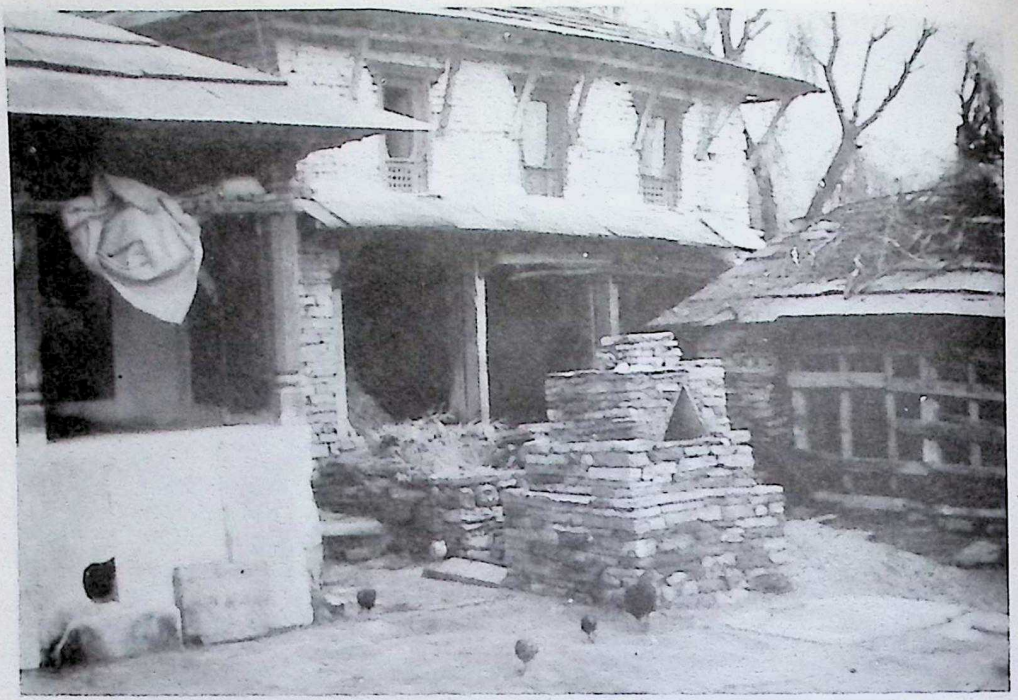
[8] Prof. von Furer-Haimendorf had been present at this festival in 1958. He told me that the dancers seemed to be possessed by the characters which they represented. His description of the characters on the stage differed a little from that which I got from an old man who organised this festival at Ghandrung.



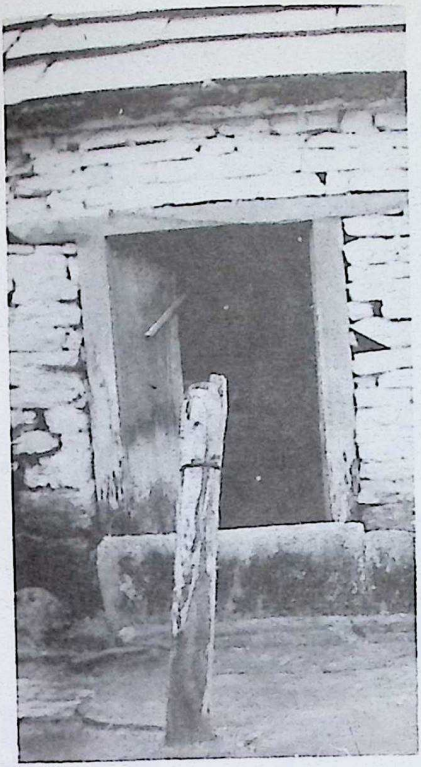
40. Young person's *nogar* leaving for work

41. *nogar* resting during the afternoon meal.



42. Place of worship of a lineage at Kõta

43. Interior of a shrine at Mohoriya

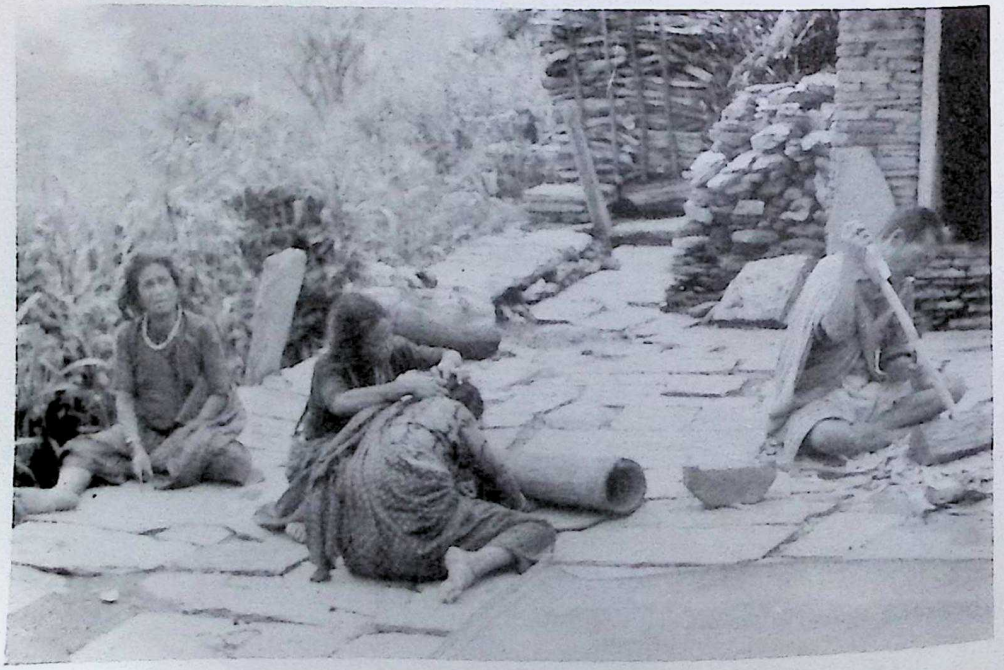


44. *koe* at Kōta

45. Offering of *kaīdu* at the crossroads

46. Statuettes (*kaīdu*) of the principal deities.

47. Village meeting at the *chautara* in Mohoriya.



48. Scene of daily life. Note sitting postures.

C. - EXCEPTIONAL RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

When an epidemic or a natural catastrophe (drought; landslide) strikes a village, the inhabitants think that such a misfortune is due to the unlucky action of certain spirits or to the discontent of the gods. The villagers decide to appease them by celebrating an appropriate rite. The *krōh* calls together the village assembly who check the details of the ceremony which must put an end to the crisis. We will describe the ceremonies corresponding to three of these crisis.

- *Rahni*: celebrated in the case of an epidemic decimating the people.

- *Pani do* (nep. "gift of water"), celebrated in case of drought.

- Village *Pūjā*: the *khedo-e pūjā* (*khedo*: beast) is celebrated in the case of an epidemic devastating the herds.

- *Rahni*: is done in cases of epidemics such as cholera which decimate the population of a village. The pucu officiates. The ceremony must take place on a Tuesday. My pucu informant told me that Rahni was formerly celebrated once a year in the month of Sawan (July-August). A shortened form of the ritual is done in Sawan during the festival of Sangrati which we have previously studied.

The pucu sets himself up in the main square of the village and stays there almost all day. In front of him are placed the offerings of *cuh* in a basket and *acheta* on a plate and the nine plants given for Sangrati. The pucu recites: *ćhō-dā*, *me-dā*, *ṅahr-dō*, *tōh-dā*, *pundul-pucu*, *krōlu-pucu*, and *daure-mōh*, prayers which I will explain later (cf. p. 345). At the beginning of the ceremony, the priest gives to a young boy a branch of *paĩ*. Then while mentally reciting a *mantra*, he blows over a handful of rice and throws it over the child "who begins to tremble". The boy goes away and wanders through all the village. During this time the pucu recites the histories cited above, whilst throwing small stones in front of him from time to time. Finally, the priest goes to four exits from the village which are found at each of the four cardinal points and there he pushes into the ground a plough-share on which he puts sprigs of the nine herbs. These same herbs are burnt by each family in front of their

house. They kill a chicken and a goat, the blood of which is sprinkled on the four plough-shares.

- *Pani do* (*pāni*: water, nep.; *do*: to give, nep.): it often happens that the first rains of the monsoon may be late. In 1958, for example, they were more than ten days later than the normal date. The heat was extreme and the drought began to burn the seedlings of millet and rice ready for transplanting. The headman of the village decided to stop work in the fields for a day. The villagers were divided into several groups who wandered through the different parts of the village praying: "*pāni do*". The Tailor musicians went with the Gurungs and played their instruments (trumpets, drums, etc.); one group of villagers climbed the mountain overhanging Mohoriya to the highest point of the village. There they made a small altar of upright stones on which they put offerings of rice and fried bread. They attached red and white ribbons there, following the Nepalese custom, and all the onlookers shouted towards the four cardinal points: "*pāni do!...pāni do*!".

A ceremony takes place in most of the regions of Nepal before the arrival of the monsoon.

- Village *pūjā*: The Gurungs use the Sanskrit and north Indian word, *pūjā*, when they want to describe a religious festival borrowed from the Nepalo-Indian tradition. Such a ceremony is always accompanied by animal sacrifice. A village *pūjā* is usually celebrated when an epidemic kills off the animals.

In 1958 five buffaloes in Mohoriya died within four days. The village celebrated a puja for the whole of one day. They abstained from working in the fields. The first part of the ceremony takes place on the terrace of the headman of the village. Offerings of rice and fried bread are brought by the families who own buffaloes and put around a large vertical branch symbolising a tree. Red and white ribbons are attached to it. The elders of the village officiate. They "purify" a chicken, a goat and a buffalo by pouring water on their heads, and these are sacrificed at the end of the ceremony. Two or three girls aged from 12-14 are seated on a mat, magnificently dressed, and preside over the ceremony. Then the onlookers, laden with the offerings and the branch of the tree carried with its base on a stretcher, dragging along the animals to be sacrificed, leave the village in single file, the Untouchable musicians

leading the way. In a field to the south of the village they celebrate the second part of the puja. A small stone altar is set up. There they sacrifice the animals to the spirits or gods (?) which must be appeased. During this the men dance, accompanied by Gurung popular songs, then merrymaking follows on a flat piece of ground near the place of sacrifice. The young men organise running, pitching the stone, etc. Finally the meat of the animals which have been sacrificed is cooked and eaten there by all the participants.

D. - COMMENTS.

The preceding summary of the Gurung religious calendar leads us to make some comments. The festivals of the calendar are derived, both from an ancient Gurung influence which has been merged, to a certain extent, with that of pre-Buddhist Tibet, and at the same time, from the more recent Hindu influence. We will attempt to classify these festivals under two main headings: "Gurung" festivals and "Nepalo-Gurung" festivals.

The "Gurung" festivals consist mainly of one or two rites which characterise the religion of the pucus and the klihbrīs (rites which we will analyse in detail later): the rite of capture (search for and capture of a benevolent spirit or an evil spirit) and the rite of expulsion (expulsion of an evil spirit). These two rites do not appear in the other festivals. In the "Gurung" festivals we include:

- *Rahni* (*Sangrati* is a form of *Rahni*) ceremony during which one captures and expels a spirit or spirits bringing epidemics.

- *Totē*, which in all respects is similar to the *Rahni* ceremony.

- *Sildo*, ceremony during which one looks for and then captures the spirit which makes the earth fruitful and brings the rain.

Except for *Totē*, the Gurung ceremonies are celebrated by Gurung priests. *Totē* is nothing more than an incomplete form of *Rahni*. Only the children intervene and chase and restrain the spirits bringing illness.

The "Gurung" festivals are village festivals. All the households get together to chase away a common enemy, the spirit bringing epidemics, or to look for, capture and invoke a beneficent spirit. The priest is remunerated by the community. Thus, the klihbrī at Mohoriya who presided during *sildo thi-ba* received in recompense for his services the use of a field belonging to the village.

Note that there are "Gurung" family ceremonies, but they do not take place on a definite date and are not celebrated on the same day in all the households. The illness of an individual, bad luck, impoverishment of a family, gives rise to these ceremonies.

The "Nepalo-Gurung" festivals of Hindu influence are celebrated throughout Nepal. But, whereas the "Gurung" festivals take place following a precise ritual which only a certain number of onlookers understand, the performance of a village *pūjā*, for example, is quite surprising. Nobody knows exactly to which deity it is addressed nor whether it is better to officiate in such and such a manner. Several old people in the village perform the rite. Often they discuss it together in order to know what they have to do. The ritual of the ceremonies born of a Hindu influence have not been generally assimilated by the Gurung population who only mechanically repeat gestures and words which they do not understand. The unorthodox way in which the Gurungs perform the purification rites in the *pūjā* confirms this conclusion.

We have chosen the term "Nepalo-Gurung" to describe these festivals because the Gurungs have added onto them rites which, it seems, are not found anywhere else in Nepal. (Here I do not speak of the corruption of the correct Hindu rites as I have indicated earlier). Thus the Gurungs have at the *Dasarah* festival a long ritual dance called *Mahda* or *Soroti* which, even though it is accompanied by a recitation whose form and origin are strongly influenced by the Nepalo-Indian tradition, is only done, to my knowledge, by the Gurungs. Note finally that the ceremonies which I have called "Nepalo-Gurung" usually consist of animal sacrifice, offerings of blood playing a large part in traditional Gurung beliefs.[109]

CHAPTER XV

THE RITUAL OF THE GURUNG RELIGIONS[1].

A. - THE RITUAL OF THE PUCU.

First of all we will look at the system on which the pucu bases the making of horoscopes.

I. - The System of the Horoscope.

For his horoscope, the pucu uses the palm of the left hand (fig. 31). There are eight positions whose order is fixed from I to VIII. Each of these points is called *parga* [2], (*parga śĭ, parga soĭ*, etc.)[3]. Each year,

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[1] Looking through the Gurung perspective, I distinguish two Gurung religions, that of the pucu and that of the klihbri.

[2] *parga* is equivalent to the Tibetan word *par-k'a* or *pu-kwa*, cited by WADDELL (*The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, p. 456). Waddell indicates that, according to Legge, "*pŭ* is the Chinese symbol which is used to prophesy together with lines obtained by a certain procedure from the back of the shell of a tortoise; *kwa* is a symbol which allows one to prophesy by using the eight triangles of Fu-hsi which are called the eight *kwa*".

[3] The following is a comparative table of the Gurung *parga* and that of the Tibetan *parkha* (the names of the latter are given in *Buddhism in Tibet*, by SCHLAGINTWEIT, p. 307).

Tibetan parkha		*Gurung parga*	
li	N. fire	*lih*	S. fire
khon	N.E. earth	*khoĭ*	S.W. earth

a man changes his *parga* (we will study later how this change is made). Each of the eight positions is placed in regard to the four cardinal points: I is to the east (one always starts at this position as it corresponds to the most important point, that of the rising sun). III is to the south , V to the west, VII to the north.

To each of these four *parga* is linked a god and a colour:

- I, the god of the east is *śyar-tohrje-samba* (*syar*: east) = ? tib., *car Rdo-iǰe sems-dpa'* : "to the east, Varjasattva"). The east is white.
- III, the god of the south is *lo-rhinicyoni* (*lo*,: south) (= ? tib., *Lho Rin-čhen byriṅ gnas*: "to the south, Ratnasambhava"). The south is red.
- V, the god of the west is *nuh-nawa-thajyõ-tuhba* (*nuh*: west) (= ? tib., *Nub Snan-ba mthá yas*: "to the west, Amitâbah"). The west is black.
- VII, the god of the north is *cyõ-thajyõ-tuhba* (*cyõ*: north). The north is blue-green.

In the centre of the hand, one finds the god *wainabarnaje* who is the central pillar of the world and who holds up the dome of the sky.

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da	E. iron	*da* [*ta*]	W. iron
khen	S.E. heaven	*khẽ*	N.W. earth
kham	S. water	*khã*	N. water
gin	S.W. mountain	*gẽ* [*k-hhin*]	N.E. earth
zin	W. tree	*śĩ*	E. wood
zon	N.W. air	*soĩ*	S.E. earth.

The Gurungs do not distinguish between *khoĩ, khẽ, gẽ, soĩ* = earth. If one compares the geographical directions, one gets the following diagram.

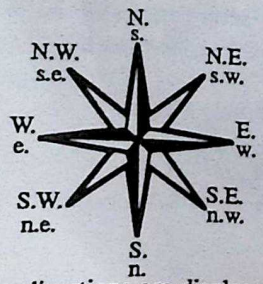

Figure 30 - Compass points of the horoscope

(capital letters indicate the Tibetan system, small letters the Gurung system)

The Gurung directions are displaced by 180° in relation to the Tibetan ones.

The four intermediate points, II, IV, VI and VIII are yellow. Each of the *parga* corresponds to an element: I, *śī*: wood; II, IV, VI and VIII, *sa*: earth; III, *me*: fire; V, *pai*: iron; VII, *kyu*: water. These five elements are found in the Tibetan system,[4] but are placed in a different way. That which is to the north among the Tibetans is to the south among the Gurungs and vice versa. It is the same for the east and west. Each year is designated by its *lho* (tib., *lo*: year), and its sign, which is expressed by the name of an animal. Twelve *lho* form a cycle of twelve years, after which the cycle starts again with *to-lho*. Thus:

1950	*to-lho*	is under the sign of the	tiger	(as in tib.)[5]
1951	*hui-lho*	" "		cat (tib.: hare)
1952	*mobru-lho*	" "		vulture (tib. dragon) (cf. p. 408)
1953	*sabru-lho*	" "		snake (as in tib.)
1954	*ta-lho*	" "		horse "
1955	*lhu-lho*	" "		sheep "
1956	*pre-lho*	" "		monkey "
1957	*che-lho*	" "		bird "
1958	*khi-lho*	" "		dog "
1959	*pho-lho*	" "		deer (tib.: pig)
1960	*chui-lho*	" "		rat (as in tib.)
1961	*lo-lho*	" "		cow (tib.: ox)

The dragon is absent from Gurung mythology which uses the vulture instead, the bird which does not fear thunder and lightning and which glides tirelessly over the high range of the Annapurnas. The substitution of the deer (or more exactly the large game of the high lands, wild Himalayan goat, the musk-deer, etc.) for the pig is explained by a quite different reason. The pig is impure for the Gurung, a unique fact in Nepal, it seems. The Gurungs have therefore played on the

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[4] WADDELL, *op. cit.*, p. 451

[5] The list of twelve Tibetan terms shows how the phonetic transformation of these terms took place when passing into the Gurung language: *stag, yos, hbrug, sbrul, rta, lug, spre, bya, khyi, phag, byi-ba, glaṅ*. In an article in *B.S.O.A.S.*, vol. XVII, Part I, 1955, p. III, J. BURTON PAGE gives the following list of twelve Gurung terms: *to`lo, `ywi`lo, `mupru`lo, sa`pryw`lo, ta`lo, `lu`lo, pra`lo, `ce`lo, khi`lo, cu`lo, lõ`lo.*

phonetic similarity between *phag* (tib.: pig) and *pho* (gur., generic name for the large mountain game), to avoid having a year in their cycle under the sign of the pig.

The yearly cycle starts on the first day of Chait like the Nepalese and Tibetan years. Under the influence of the European calendar, certain Gurungs are now beginning the year on the fifteenth day of Pus, that is to say on our first day of January.

The twelve *lho* are divided among the eight *parga*. The *parga* corresponding to the four cardinal points are each linked to two *lho*, the four intermediate points have only one.

I. *to-lho* and *hui-lho*
II. *mobru-lho*
III. *sabru-lho* and *ta-lho*
IV. *lhu-lho*
V. *pre-lho* and *che-lho*
VI. *khi-lho*
VII. *pho-lho* and *chui-lho*
VIII. *lõ-lho*

Thus, while having borrowed the elements of their system from Tibet, the Gurungs have created a new, clearly different, system, ignoring in particular the sixty year cycle of Jupiter, which links the five elements to the twelve animal cycles [6]

2. - The way the system works.

A Gurung is incapable of giving his exact date of birth. But he can give his *lho*, the sign of the year in which he was born. To calculate his age, he counts how many *lho* separate that of his birth and the present year, including the *lho* of his birth, which gives his age with a maximum error equal to one year and 364 days. If for example, he was born on the 31st December 1955, on the 1st January 1958 he is two years and a day. But a Gurung counts 1955 plus 1956 plus 1957 plus 1958, thus four years. (To simplify the example, we have used the dates of the Roman calendar. It remains valid if one uses the Nepali calendar.) We could say that on average, a Gurung makes himself older by a year when he gives his age. However, he knows how many cycles have gone by since his

[6] WADDELL, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

birth and counts accordingly. Even this does not make an allowance for the fact that in calculating his age, a Gurung makes a difference between a person born at the beginning and a person born at the end of a year. (*Lho-kra* literally the "head" of the *lho*, the beginning of the *lho*, is used for a person born at the start of a year; *lho-mā*, (or *lho-mei*) the "tail" of the *lho*, is used for somebody born at the end of the year).

Taking this into account, it is now possible to explain how one determines the *parga* of a person during the current year. It is necessary to distinguish two cases:

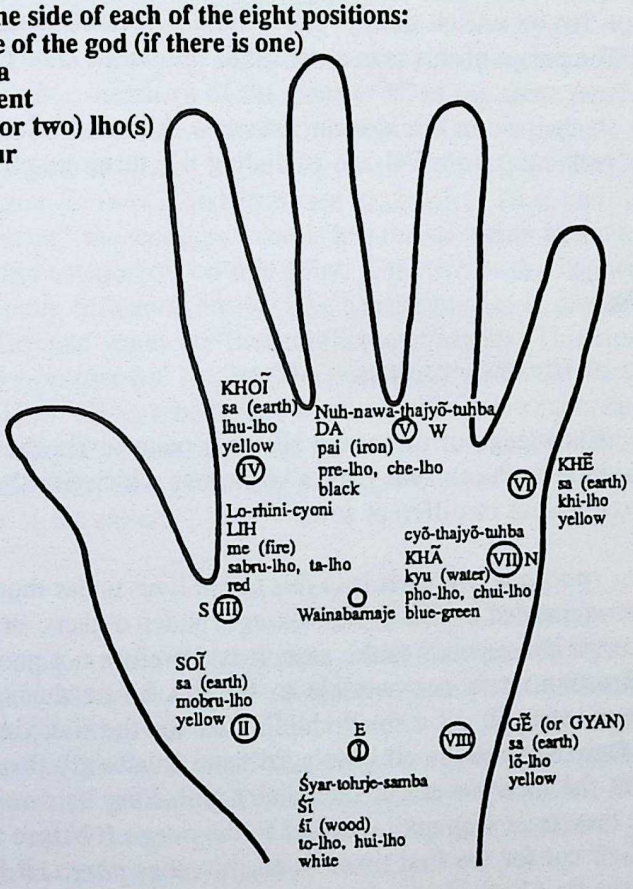

Figure 31 - The hand and the horoscopic system of the pucu.

If the person is a man, one begins to count "reckoning from point III, excluding it", in a clockwise direction. If he is ten years or less, each point counts as a year. If he is more than ten years, IV counts as ten years. If he is more than twenty years, IV and VI each count as ten years, but one does not count V. If he is more than thirty years, IV, VI, and VIII each counts for ten years, but one does not count V and VII, and so on.
For example:

- A man is twenty-six in 1958. We count IV = ten, VI = ten, VII = one, VIII = one, I = one, II = one, III = one, VI = one, which is ten + ten + one + one + one + one + one + one = twenty-six years. The *parga* of this man is in 1958, the *parga khoi* IV.

If the person is a woman, one uses the same rules but begins to count "reckoning from VII and excluding it", turning anti-clockwise.

3. - Uses.

a) *Use of horoscopes.*

Knowledge of the *parga* allows a pucu to fix the horoscope of each person for the current year, a horoscope which translates very often into prohibitions of different sorts:

- *parga śŕ*: whoever is in this *parga* lives under the sign of wood. It is recommended that he avoid making wooden objects, or cutting trees. This *parga* corresponds to the east. It is therefore not good to travel in this direction. It is not possible to build a house during this *parga*. However, one can cut a small child's hair for the first time during this year. One often sees small boys aged from five to six (I only talk about boys as the girls never cut their hair) with long hair secured in little plaits; they must wait until they are in the *parga śŕ* before they can have their hair cut for the first time. In all the other *parga*, it is not good to make the first haircut.

- *parga soṭ*: the person lives under the sign of the earth. It is not advisable for him to buy land and to undertake a long journey to the south-east.

It is easy to imagine, according to these two examples, the horoscope corresponding to the other *parga*. As a general rule it is not good to use the element of the *parga* in which one finds oneself or to travel in the geographical direction which characterises it. It is also necessary to note that *pargas* III and VII are dangerous. A man who finds himself in either of these is subject to all sorts of bad luck because he is weak and cannot fight effectively against attacks by evil spirits.

The pucu must also study the *parga* of a person in relation to those of the other members of the family. If, in the same family, there is one person in the *parga śṭ* and another in the *parga da*, one of these two is in danger of death, especially the one in *śṭ*. In fact, the two elements *śṭ* and *da* (wood and iron) are in conflict. Thus, one says that the iron "crushes" the wood as wood is less resistant than iron. However, the pucu is not categorical on this point. The reverse can happen and *śṭ* have an unlucky influence on *da*. The same situation is found with III and VII as fire and water are two conflicting elements. This situation is called *lati pre-ba* (*pre-ba*: to cut). The pucu usually sees the lines joining I to V and III to VII as a bad sign. If two people in the same family are in two corresponding *parga* which have their cardinal points directly opposite each other, one of them is in danger of death, as he lives under the pressure of the other.

For example:

- During my stay in Mohoriya, I saw two cases of this type. In one case, the head of a house went to see the pucu priest so that he might save his sick son who was only a few months old. The pucu calculated that the *parga* of the father was VII giving the element water, that of his son was III, which is fire. The priest then said to the father, "I can do nothing for you. Your *parga* crushes that of your son. He is going to die". The child died two days later.

If, in the same family, two people are in the same *parga*, one of the two can fall seriously ill, as it is not good that two *parga* meet each

other in the same household. This case is called *saña pre-ba*. The same conclusions are drawn by the pucu, when, instead of two people, there are three in the same family each of whose *parga* meet in the pairs of *parga* studied above. Thus, if two of them are in III, the third in VII is in great danger. One then says *parga põh-ba*, "the *parga* struggle".

According to the *parga*, the pucu determines whether a marriage should take place. If the groom is in I and the bride in V, or vise versa, the marriage is possible. If the groom is in II and the bride in IV, it is better to put back the marriage. If the groom is in VI and the bride in VIII, it is again preferable to put it off. If the groom is in III and the bride is in VII, the marriage must not take place.

As told me by several informants, these rules are completed by the following: a person can marry whoever is in the second *loh* which follows his. For example: A person born in *to-lho* can marry a person born in *mobru-lho*. This last rule is perhaps an addition to the old system. In fact, in all the system studied so far, the *lho* never plays a direct role. It only helps to calculate the *parga* which alone bears directly on the pucu's predictions. However, note that this marriage rule tends to avoid marriages between two people of the same age. There are many ways of interpreting the *parga*. All pucus do not agree when making a horoscope for the same person. Nevertheless, the *parga* system, such as we have described, is common to all the Gurung country.

b) *Use in ritual.*

The pucu decides the ceremony which he will perform as a result of the *parga* of the person for whom he is officiating. If a man or a woman falls ill who is in *parga śĩ*, the priest will do *cha-gu tẽh*. If the sick person is in II or VIII, the priest will do *tuhr tẽh*. If the sick man is in III or VII, the priest will do *ghaesur tẽh*. If the sick person is in IV or VI, the priest will do *sinja tẽh*. If the sick person is in V, the pucu does not officiate. The family of the sick person must recite prayers or *mantra* which are their own.

For *yõ-khu-ba tẽh* which is performed to bring good fortune and long life to the household, it is preferable that the head of the family is in *parga śĩ* or *parga da*, which are, in general, the two *parga* which are most lucky for a man and the opposite of *parga lih* and *khã*.

4. - Ritual. [110]

The ceremonies of the pucus are of different kinds. Each has a well defined ritual corresponding to clearly expressed conditions. However, it is necessary to remark that with the exception of funerals, all these ceremonies develop following an almost identical scenario. Only certain manual and oral rites differ. The ceremony generally takes place in the evening, after the meal, inside the house of the persons who have asked for the services of a priest.

After having arranged the things which he will need in front of him, the pucu sits down cross-legged and, wearing his ornaments, starts to officiate. Usually, the ritual begins with the recitation of a mantra, a kind of secret incantation which the priest pronounces in an unintelligible voice, the purpose of which is to "protect him from attack by evil spirits against which he will struggle" [111]. Then the priest "purifies" all the objects, persons, spirits and gods which are going to take part in the ceremony. "That the incense (which burns in front of the officiant in a small bowl) purify [7] this house! That the incense purify the god Wainabarnaje...", cries the priest. After this he offers cereal grains (mostly rice) to the gods (*cuh*), and then millet grains, barley, and buckwheat (*acheta*) to the ancestors of the pucus.

In the same way as the lama, the pucu takes some grains and when he is reciting the first prayers of the ritual, he throws them one by one in front of him. Theoretically, the offering of *cuh* provided by the family who has sent for the priest is of nine *pathi* of grain, that of *acheta* of nine *mana*. In practice, the amount of grain offered is often less than these figures. Only a few grains are thrown by the priest who, as payment for his services, carries off the rest of the offerings for his personal consumption. The offering of grain alcohol (*pa*) which follows is meant for the pucu's ancestors.

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[7] I cannot check whether the meaning of *ćāguri* (to purify) is exact. In fact, the word *ćāguri* is only used nowadays by the pucus. Throughout this study, I have often found myself in similar situations, the words used by the priests no longer belonging to current vocabulary. I will therefore put the translation in quotes. In the present case, it seems that *ćāguri* may well mean "to purify" as, in Tibetan, *sbyaṅ* pronounced *ch'aṅ* means "to purify".

To sum up, the officiating priest offers food and drink in honour of his ancestors and of his gods to this end, that they come to help him when he is battling against evil spirits. After this introduction, the ceremony proper can start. It is called *tēh*. The oral and manual ritual is called *keh* (a word which usually means "work"). During the ceremony, the priest recites several *pe* (mythical histories). In all he knows about fifty, which are of variable length. To each *tēh*, there correspond a certain number of *pe*; the word *pe* is both Gurung and Tibetan (*dpe*). In Tibetan, it means "history". For example, each *pe* of the pucu starts with the phrase "...*pe-dā luh-dā se-mu*" (*luh*: song, like *glu* in Tibetan; the verb *se-ba*, in Gurung and *bçad-pa*, in Tibetan means: to explain, to know). One could translate this phrase by: "we explain the history sung by...". What sort of history is it? Broadly, one could translate a *pe* as follows:

"A long time ago, an ancestor of a famous pucu had success in overcoming, in such and such a way, this or that evil spirit, in such and such circumstances. By repeating today that which was done then, may the same happy result affect a member or members of the house in which we find ourselves."

The aim of the *pe* is to confirm the validity and efficacy of a ritual which has been passed on intact by the ancestors. The ritual has no value if one doesn't describe it. It is necessary to know the origin of all that is used, done or said during the ceremony. One finds the same idea in the religion of the Na-khi of south-west China, described in several books by J.F. Rock. In one of the stories which is translated, one finds this phrase, for example: "If the place of origin of the dance is not told, one cannot talk of it. Not knowing the origin of the dance, one cannot dance[8]."

pe has a second meaning, that of "custom", "unshakeable custom". To act against it would be to act against nature. For example, one encounters the phrase: "It is the custom that (one day) the big tree

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[8] J.F. ROCK, *The [2]Zhi-[3]ma funeral ceremony of the [1]Na-[2]Khi*, p. 87.

falls". The same, in J.F. Rock: "Thus the trees must also die, it is the custom[9]."

To sum up, the *pe* told by the pucu is a history which validates the ritual not only because it narrates that a famous pucu had done it successfully, but also because it belongs to the custom and any other way of proceeding cannot be envisaged. Generally *pe* is translated as "myth", except where the Gurung view point must be conserved, where "history" is used in the sense of the telling of actual events.

Gradually, as the *pe* are recited, the pucu does certain manual rites which are more or less directly described in the *pe*. Often, a chicken is sacrificed, its blood being given to a spirit in exchange for the soul which he keeps prisoner. In general, the priest does not do the sacrifice himself. One of the onlookers takes it upon himself to cut the animal's throat.

a) *Ceremonies.*

Ceremonies performed by the pucu can be classified as follows:

- those which are performed when a person is ill.
- those which are performed when a household has bad luck, illness, poverty, death, fire, sterility or when they wish to protect themselves from these disasters through forethought.
- those which are performed at the time of funerals. I will not examine these latter ceremonies until I have looked at those performed by the klihbrī as the rituals of pucu and klihbrī merge at funerals.

b) *Cases of illness.*

When a pucu comes to visit a sick person at the request of the family of the latter, two solutions are open to him:

- On examination, he diagnoses that the sick person is suffering from a natural illness. He then advises the use of a medicine (*mot*) made

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[9] J.F. ROCK, *op. cit.*, p. 75; for "custom", the Na-khi uses the word *'ndu* which is, according to Rock, equivalent to the active male principle of the Chinese, *yang*.

from diverse herbs, which he often makes himself. Usually, the illness is mild and appears for the first time in the patient. Some pucu say they have the power to tell if the illness is natural or due to some supernatural cause by taking the pulse and touching the sick person's nerves. (I was not able to get anything precise on this subject.)

- The priest decides that the sick man is suffering from a supernatural ailment. He has been seriously ill a long time. Using the horoscope, the priest determines the ceremony which can chase away the evil which puts the life of the patient in danger.

- *cha-gu tēh*. This ceremony is performed when the sick person is in *parga śt. Cha* means "age" or "long life". If *cha* dwells in a house, the inhabitants live to an old age. In the opposite case, a person in the family can fall ill and be in danger of dying because *cha* has left the house. The pucu must perform *cha-gu tēh* to make *cha* return to the house and thus save the sick person's life; *cha* is symbolised by a bird, *cha-name* (*name* means "bird"). When a house is being built, the pucu models a statuette in rice paste which represents this bird [10] and this is kept inside the new house. When a member of the family dies, it can happen that *cha* leaves the house with the dead person. During the funeral ceremonies, it is the role of the pucu to ask the dead man not to take *cha* away with him. "Carry away the short life, but leave long life to the living", he cries out to the dead man. We will see later that *cha* is always connected to *pleh*, good luck, which is also symbolised by a bird, *pleh-name*.

In the word *cha-gu* it is difficult to be precise about the meaning of *gu*. Perhaps it is a corruption of *ku* which means nine (the number

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[10] In most of the ceremonies, the priest models rice cakes (*kaī-du*, of *kaī*: cooked rice, food). Certain of them are ornithomorphic (*cha*) or anthropomorphic (unlucky spirits: Ghaesar-phi and Daure) and for these, the representative function is more important than the sacrificial. The others which are only imitations of *tor-ma* (*gtor-ma*) used by the Tibetan lamas, are cones and are considered in the prayers as offerings of food destined for gods (generally borrowed from the Tibetan Buddhis pantheon). In fact, the representative, symbolic function of the *kaī-du* is predominant. A priest says: "This *kaī-du* is Ghaesar-phi, that is Wainabarnaje" and not: "This *kaī-du* is an offering of food for Ghaesar-phi, for Wainabarnaje".

nine often follows the words "soul", "spirit" etc.), or it could be a corruption of *khu* (the verb *khu-ba*: to collect, to reap). The pucu recites in succession several *pe*:

- *ćhō-dā* (*ćhō*: purification; *dā*: is perhaps a form of the word *tā* which means: subject of conversation): purification with incense.[11]

- *prah-dā noh-dā*: (*prah* is the yeast used when making the grain alcohol, *pa*; the modern Gurung is *pram*). This history of the creation of yeast and of grain alcohol ends with the words: "That the *pa* be offered to the ancestors of the pucus, that it stop the evils of those who are living...".

- *me-dā* (*me*: fire). This *pe* tells of the creation of fire. "Thanks to the fire, everything is possible."

- *nahr-dō* (*ṅah*: is the name of the pucu's drum; *dō* is perhaps a corruption of *dā*). This *pe* tells how the *ṅah* was made with wood from a tree. "That the drum heal the sick person".

- *tōh kor-ba* (*tōh*: area surrounding a village; *kor-ba*: to go round). The pucu enumerates one after the other all the named places in the village territory when calling for the lost soul.

- *pundul-pucu* (*pundul* is the name of a pucu who is a famous ancestor). One is told here how the religious knowledge of the *pundul pucu* was transmitted to his son and what it is necessary to do to recover the lost soul.

- *krōlu-pucu* or *krulu-pucu* (*krōlu* was another famous pucu). In this *pe* is told how one day krōlu-pucu overcame the spirits which had spread illness in the land of Cō. "Today, may it be the same as in the time of krōlu-pucu."

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[11] To give an idea of the succession of rites during the ceremo nies described, I shall give a brief summary of each *pe*. {Cf. above, p. *xxviii*}.

- *cha-name pleh-name* (we have explained the meaning of these words above) is the history of the two birds which are carriers of long-life and good luck. "That they inhabit this house."

- *dagdawa* is the history of two old men who met long-life and good luck one day. "That long-life and good luck be in this house." During the ceremony, two small birds made from rice paste are put in front of the pucu. When all the *pe* have been recited, the priest leaves the house and walks in the direction of the east. He puts the two small birds with a bit of water and ribbons of white material at the end of the village (white is the colour of the east).

A chicken is sacrificed and its blood offered in exchange for the soul of the sick person as the krõlu-pucu had done. Then, returning to the house, the pucu ties a small piece of cotton round the neck of the sick person, *rupa* (*ru*: thread), which symbolises the return of the soul into the body of the sick man[12].

- *tuhr tẽh*. (One finds *tuhr* in the word *tuhr-jõ* or *tuhr-ja*: cemetery. We will see later the role which the cemetery plays in this ceremony which is performed when a sick person is in *parga soṭ* and *parga gẽ*). According to an informant, a man of clan A married a woman from clan B. A member of this latter clan died "eaten by the mountain" (killed by an avalanche, landslide, etc.) and became an evil spirit *si-si-sa-ba* (*si*: dead), which began to trouble the well-being of clan A. To sum up, the illness may be caused by an unlucky spirit born of the clan (or rather of the line) which has given a woman to that of the ill person.

The day of the ceremony is fixed by a calculation called *kra-ca-ba*.

For example:

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[12] This rite is very like that described by A. HENRY, in "The Lolos and other Tribes of Western China" (*J.A.I.*, vol. XXIII, 1903, pp. 96-107). The author, dealing with the Lolos, says (p. 102): "The soul is supposed to leave the body in cases of chronic illness. A complicated ritual is then read, a kind of litany, in which the soul is called by name and besought to return from the mountains. After the ceremony is over, a red cord is tied round the arm of the sick man.. and this cord is worn till it drops of itself from decay".

- A man falls ill on the 29th of Jeth, in the Nepalese year 2015. The sign of the year of his birth is *che-lho*. The pucus have definitely fixed that the full moon in Asoj corresponds to the sign *mobru-lho* and that each full and new moon corresponds to another sign of the twelve cyclical years. In our example, there are five days between 29th Jeth and the next new moon, and its sign is marked by the pucu as *lõ-lho*. One counts the number of *lho* separating *lõ-lho*, sign of the next new moon, from *che-lho*, sign of the year in which the sick man was born. There are thus eight. Therefore, the ceremony will have to take place eight days after the beginning of the illness. To cut short this long wait, the pucu performs a short *tẽh* (ceremony) the same evening of the day on which he has been summoned. He carries to the crossroads, which are at the south-east and north-east of the village (following the sick person's *parga*), some grains of rice made yellow with saffron and some yellow ribbons (colour of the south-east and north-east) which have been previously shaken round the sick man's head. A chicken is sacrificed and the path marked with its blood. This ritual is called *sõ-kyãh-po-ri ća-ba* (*sõ-kyãh-po-ri*: at the three pathways, at the crossroads; *ća-ba*: to eat?).

Naturally, the ceremony of *tuhr* only takes place if the sick man is still suffering on the day indicated by *kra ća-ba*. The pucu then recites in order: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, tõh kor-ba, pundul-pucu, krõlu pucu*. A chicken is sacrificed and offered to *Sar-phi-rini* in exchange for the soul of the sick person that she helps to find as is explained in the *pe* of *krõlu-pucu*. But the soul does not return directly to the house but stays in the cemetery in the hands of the master of the cemetery (*kleh*). Nine small pebbles, if the sick person is a man, seven if a woman, are collected in the cemetery "to help the soul to find the way to the sick person's house". They are placed between the feet of a tripod (*ćõh*) (on which the cooking pots are put above the fire), with a rice statuette symbolising the master of the cemetery. The whole is covered with a sack surmounted with a triangle made with three sticks of *tipur* wood. At the beginning of the ceremony, this triangle has been put on the sick person's head "to allow *Sar-phi-rini* to recognise the sick man's soul among the other wandering souls". The stones are shaken under the sack by the pucu "to help the soul find the path again". The priest then says to the master of the cemetery: "*tuhr-jõ kleh*, let the soul go". Then he puts a thread around the neck of the sick person, symbolising the return

of the lost soul into the body. The pebbles and the rice statuette are carried to the cemetery.

- *ghaesur tēh* or *ghaesar tēh* (*ghaesar-phi* is the name of an unlucky spirit). According to some informants, the pucu must struggle against the spirit of a man who is burnt (remember that the sick man is, in the case of *ghaesur tēh*, in the *parga* of fire or water). As for *tuhr tēh*, the pucu first of all performs *so-kyāh-po-ri ća-ba* (also called *dopate ća-ba*; *dopate* [13] is the Nepali equivalent of *sō-kyāh-po-ri*), in the north or south direction with rice and strips of red or blue material according to the direction and the *parga*. Then, *ghaesur tēh* takes place. The pucu recites: *ćhō-dā, prah-dā, noh-hā, me-da, ṅahr-dō, toh kor-ba, pundul-pucu, krōlu-pucu, ghaesar-phi*. This last *pe* tells of how the unlucky spirit which had spread illness in the village was reduced to impotence by a pucu ancestor. "That he will do the same today". The ceremony has two aims. It is necessary to chase away the bad luck which oppresses a person in the *parga* "fire" or "water", as we have already indicated. It is also necessary to recover the lost soul from the evil spirit and keep the latter outside the village.

A man first of all shoots four arrows with flaming tips in the four geographical directions, to chase away the evil spells. Previously, several drops of blood from a sacrificed chicken had been allowed to fall on the arrows and onto the rice statuettes symbolising bad luck. A statuette of the unlucky spirit Ghaesar-phi (made by the pucu with cooked barley flour) is also sprinkled with drops of blood from the chicken. Nine kinds of grain (*satbyu patbyu*) are waved nine times around the sick man's head and put on the statuette. Everything is then carried to the crossroads, to the south or north of the village (according to the *parga*) after the pucu has tied a thread around the sick man's neck.

- *sin-ja tēh* (*sin* comes from the verb *si-ba*: to die. It seems that *sin-ja* has the same meaning as *tuhr-ja*: cemetery, place of the dead). The sick man is in *parga khoĭ* or *khe* the element of which is earth. A pucu has asserted to me that, in this case, the illness is caused by the spirit of a man who died young or who fell from a tree or a mountain. Firstly,

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13 ["*dobate*, ...situated at the junction of two roads" (TURNER, Dict.).]

the prior ceremony of *dopate ća-ba* has taken place at the south-west or north-west of the village. Then, at the date indicated, the ceremony of *sin-ja* is performed. The pucu recites in succession: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, tõh kor-ba*. The pucu goes to the cemetery where he recites *tõh korba*, naming all the place names in the village area, until a chicken held by the foot flaps its wings. This is the proof that the lost soul has been recovered and is there. The pucu goes back to the house and ties a thread around the neck of the sick man.

- *mõse ho-ba tẽh* (*mõ* is perhaps a corruption of *mõh*: sort of evil spirit). The pucu decides to perform this *tẽh* when a family is harassed by several evil spirits. Two or three members of the household are ill and previous ceremonies have not had any effect. For many hours, the priest tries to gain control over all the spirits one by one before he has the power to reintegrate the lost souls in the sick bodies. The pucu recites in succession: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, ṅahr-dõ, tõh kor-ba, pundul-pucu*, then:

- *a-pa kahrab kleh* (*a-pa*: father; *kleh*: master, owner). This name is that of an ancestor "who was when the earth and sky were created". The *pe* tells the origin of the spirit *Daure*. "That it restore the soul of the sick man and it may be controlled."

- *sar-phi-rini*. This *pe* tells of the origin of the female spirit *Sar-phi-rini* who helps the pucu to retrieve the soul of the sick person if he offers her the sacrifice of a hen in exchange for this.

- *pa-che-rhõ ma-che-rhini* (*rhõ* indicates that the name is that of a man; *rhini* or *rini*, that the name is that of a woman). This *pe* tells the origin of the unlucky spirit *Pa-che-rhõ* who died hanging. "That it restore the soul of the dead and that it may be controlled."

- *Ume-rhõ ume-rhini* (*umer*: old). This *pe* tells the origin of the spirit *Ume-rho* who died "eaten up by a landslide". "That it restore the soul of the dead and may be controlled."

- *plohbju-rhõ põhbai-rhõ*. This *pe* tells the origin of the spirit of the mother of Põhbai-rho who died killed by the stroke of an axe, the

spirits of those "eaten by the flood" and the spirit of a man who was stabbed by a knife. "That these spirits may be controlled and restore the lost soul."

- *thu-phe-rhõ thu-phe-rhini* (*thu*: eldest). This *pe* tells the origin of the spirits *thu-phe-rhõ*, who was killed by poison, and *thu-phe-rhini* who was "eaten by a tiger"(?). "That they restore the soul of the dead and may be controlled."

- *rhi-ce myõ-ce* (*rhi* or *ri*: sister, woman in general). Even though nowadays the word may not be used, the pucus affirmed to me that *myõ* had in the past meant "brother". Note the resemblance between *ce* and *che* in the preceding names. Perhaps it may be necessary to link *ce* and *che* with *caẽ*, the name of a type of spirit. This *pe* tells the origin of the spirits of the brother and sister, who, after having had an incestuous relationship, died "eaten by the mountain". "That they may be controlled and restore the lost soul."

During the ceremony, the pucu has in front of him a rice statuette representing an unlucky spirit, and the usual offerings of grain and alcohol. A basket (*dãl*) is turned over. Thin sticks of mountain bamboo serve as skewers on which little pieces of meat are stuck. They are put on the bottom of the basket beside a bow. While he is reciting the *pe*, the pucu makes the bow string vibrate. When the recitation is coming to an end, a hen is hung by a foot from a small wooden structure (*mõh-kur-śt*: *mõh*: kind of unlucky spirit; *kur* comes perhaps from *kor*: round, this could be explained by the fact that the structure is in the shape of an arch, or perhaps *kur* is a corruption of *ku*: nine; *śt* means wood). The pucu asks the spirit to come and bring the lost soul of the sick man under the *mõh-kur-śt*. If the chicken begins to flap its wings, this is the proof that the spirit is there. The pucu then hits the chicken with a small brush (*mra*). An egg is placed in a bowl just below it. If in flapping the chicken breaks the egg, there is no more doubt in the pucu's mind that the spirit is at his mercy. He has "controlled" it and made it harmless. The pucu then speaks directly to the spirit. He indicates to it the way to get out of the village and orders it never to return. If a man from the sick man's family is dead and has become a spirit, he asks him to leave the house and to take all the other unlucky spirits away with him.

- *li wa-ba tēh*. (With regard to *le* or *li*, I think it is necessary to compare *li* with *lih*, the *parga* corresponding to the south, which is an unlucky *parga*. This interpretation may be confirmed by the fact that the *pe* of *ghaesar-phi* is only told in this *tēh* and in that of *ghaesar-tēh* which corresponds to the *parga lih*; *wa-ba*: to chase, expel). This *tēh* is a kind of "low mass" for poor or oppressed people. It is performed whatever the *parga* of the sick person, in the day or at night. The pucu recites *ćhō-dā, prah-dā noh-dā, me-dā, tōh kor-ba, ghaesar-phi*.

The grains of cereals are shaken in a circle above the head of the sick person and then put on a statuette of the malevolent spirit, *ghaesar-phi*. A chicken is sacrificed and the blood sprinkled over the statuette. Then everything is carried to the crossroads corresponding to the direction of the sick person's *parga*.

c) *Case of bad luck.*

Sometimes a house may be dogged by bad luck. The members of the family die young, the harvests are bad, the cattle are decimated. To remedy this situation, the pucu comes to officiate.

- *gra wa-ba tēh* (*gra*: bad luck; *wa-ba*: to chase, expel). Sickness has come upon the house. One of the members of the family is in *parga kha* which, as we have already said, is unlucky. The day of the ceremony is fixed by the system of *kra ća-ba*.

The pucu makes a square basketwork plaque. On this he puts twelve statuettes of rice paste which represent the twelve animals of the *lho* (twelve year cycle) in a circle. In the middle, a statuette of the spirit *Daure* and a small oil lamp are placed. Four other lamps are put at the four corners of the square. Finally eight *naṅ* (small wooden crosses whose ends are joined by coloured threads, those of the eight *parga* in the lamaist manner) are placed on the edge of the square, in the middle of each side for the four cardinal points, one at each corner for the directions in between. The pucu recites in order:

ćhō-dā, prah-dā noh-dā, me-dā, pundul-pucu, krōlu-pucu, a-pa kahrab kleh. This last *pe* tells the origin of the spirit *Daure*, son of *a-pa kahrab kleh*. The family being together, each of its members takes a short wooden stick (of *klehbu*; nep., *phaleta*) and a handful of grains.

After having shaken them in a circle around their heads, each person puts the grains on the spirit's statuette and places the stick on the *naṅ* of his *parga*. A cock is sacrificed and its blood offered to the spirit Daure whilst sprinkling it onto the statuette. Then the plaque is carried to the crossroads, to the north of the village.

- *yõ khu-ba tẽh* (*yõ*: material luck (?) [14]; in modern gurung one would use *yõ-sai* (*sai*: thing); *khu-ba*: to pick, collect). This ceremony is performed when the head of the house is in *parga śĩ* or *parga da* and when it seems that good luck *pleh* is going from the family or has left it. It often happens that it was the soul of a dead member of the family who had taken it with him when he died. The object of the ceremony is to bring back good luck to the family. The pucu recites in order: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, ṅahr-dõ, tõh kor-ba, pundul-pucu, krõlu-pucu, dagdawa, cha-name, pleh-name*, then:

- *ćah-mar-śĩ-dhũ* (*ćah*: perhaps a form of *cha*: long life, or *ćah*: son; *mar*: gold; *śĩ-dhũ*: timber tree). This *pe* tells how *Cah-mar-śĩ-dhũ* refused to bury his father according to tradition. Illness and poverty came down onto his house. A pucu ancestor must be consulted to bring back into the household good luck and long life, which the dead man had taken with him because the funeral ceremony had not taken place.

There are ten cones of rice paste in front of the pucu symbolising the ten gods which he always invokes at the beginning of a ceremony. The greatest is Wainabarnaje. Beside him are placed: *tuhr-jyõ* (= ? tib. *dur-skyoṅ* "protector of the charnel-house"): the god of the cemetery, *hoigra* or *hoigar*, *kihm-jyõ*, *keda* or *kera*, *khorlo-merlo*, *śyar-tohrje samba*, the god of the east; *lo-rhini-cyoni*, the god of the south, *nuh-nawa-thajyõ-tuhba*, the god of the west, and *cyõ-thajyõ-tuhba*, the god of the north.

Besides these ten statuettes are placed numerous objects. The most important are:

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[14] The pucus do not make a distinction between the word *yõ* and the word *pleh*: good luck.

- two statuettes in the form of a bird, symbolising *cha-name* and *pleh-name*;

- *ćhardo*: a bowl filled with water, the surface of which is covered with a film of clarified butter. During the telling of the history of *dagdawa*, a kind of small, very light wheel with wooden spokes, is put on the surface of the liquid. This gesture symbolises that of the people in the history, covering over the source of the "water of richness" which they have discovered, to hide it from men's view.

- plants and objects:
mra (with which brushes are made);
ńata (grass for the cattle);
cho (halter for securing cattle);
pahre (an old man's wooden stick). Wood is the symbol of the god of the east;
copper lamp, a symbol of the god of the south;
iron instrument, symbol of the god of the west;
vase of water with a flower, symbol of the god of the north.

- *tahrjyõ* (*tahr* = ? tib. *dar* "flag"): ribbons of every colour attached to a stick stuck in a bowl of rice.

When the pucu recites *tõh kor-ba*, all the objects, with the exception of the statuettes, are carried onto the gallery of the house. The *pe* of *ćah-mar-śĩ-dhũ* relates that good luck is found near a pond. It is there that the pucu "goes" to look for it. On the terrace, the onlookers shout, *"khoe! khoe!"* (Come! Come!) in calling to good fortune. Then, the pucu puts a thread around the neck of the master of the house. The hoof of a sheep or goat as well as the *tahrjyõ* are put on his head. The soul of good luck has come back close to the head of the house. The *ńata* is then given to the cattle to eat. During the following three days, the family give nothing to other people.

- *chop chue-ba tẽh* (*chop*: according to my informants, "transactions, trade"; *chue-ba*: to make offerings, to honour). The pucu does this ceremony when the family is faced with serious problems, money loans, land purchase, law suit, promotion of a son who is a

foreign mercenary, etc. The priest recites: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, tõh kor-ba, chopa*. This *pe* recounts that one day an infant giant was born, Puhdũ-kahrdam, but his uncle succeeded in subjugating him to his mercy. He then lost the devastating habits of a giant and, in exchange for his liberty, promised to help men stricken with bad luck (or with economic or legal problems, etc.).

As well as the traditional objects, the pucu has in front of him a small cone of rice paste symbolising Puhdũ-kahrdam. At the end of the recitation, the onlookers go onto the gallery of the house and shout in every direction: *"khoe! khoe!"* (Come! Come!), calling Puhdũ-kahrdam to help. The pucu then cuts the head off the statuette and puts it on the head of the master of the house.

"Puhdũ-kahrdam has come amongst us and is our friend", the pucu concludes.

- *caẽ thi-ba tẽh* (*caẽ*: a kind of spirit). This ceremony is done in each household twice a year in the months of Chait and Asoj. The pucu does the ritual sitting on the ridge of the roof of the house. I could not get any precise reason for this. Furthermore, the priest can also officiate inside the house. During the ceremony, incense is burnt. The pucu recites: *prah-dã noh-dã, tõh kor-ba, caẽ kra-ba*, (to go in search of the spirit). The priest asks the king and queen of the snakes (*nãga*) to make the cattle thrive and to give good harvests. Offerings of fried rice are made inside the house.

d) *Case of fire.*

me-lẽ sẽ-ba tẽh.

(*me*: fire; *sẽ-ba*: to recover). This ceremony is done after a house in the village has been burnt. It is not only of interest to the family whose house has been affected, but also all the villagers. It is necessary to drive the king of fire out of the village. The pucu officiates three days after the fire. He recites in order: *ćhõ-dã, prah-dã noh-dã, me-dã, ñahr-dõ, tõh kor-ba, pundul-pucu, krõlu-pucu, a-pa kahrab kleh*, then:

- *me-lẽ kyel-ba* (king of fire). The king of fire is the youngest son of A-pa kahrab kleh. He has the job of controlling the fire which

helps men to live, but can harm them if it is not guarded. "That the king of fire control the fire. That everything grow again and reproduce. That the fire may receive food and drink in this house. Once it has got its share, it will leave".

The pucu gathers together 108 different kinds of wood which he has put into an earthenware pot. All the fires in the village are extinguished. Then the pucu can spark up the new fire. He makes a construction in wood as follows: imagine an H lying on one of its sides, these being made from two branches of *tipur* wood. The central vertical bar is made from *pala* (*ausilo*, in nep.). This is pushed loosely into each of the two horizontal sides. The upper side is then held firmly supported on the end of the vertical bar which, in turn, is held on the horizontal bar placed on the ground. A cord is wound round the vertical bar, with handles fixed at the two ends. By pulling these two ends alternately and rapidly, the vertical bar pivots in two directions and friction is produced at both ends. When the wood starts to burn slightly, the dried pulp of the wood of the banana tree is put onto it. The pulp flares up. Fire is increased by adding straw. When the fire sparks up, a cock is sacrificed and offered to the fire. Then the new fire is carried into all the houses in the village. Several brands are put in the earthenware pot which is then buried at the southern exit of the village.

e) *Case of sterility.*

- *riṅe tēh* or *riṅ-e tēh.*

(*riṅe* can be analysed in two ways: 1. - *ri* coming from *rī* or *ri* or *rhi* which has the general meaning of woman; *ṅe* may be a form of *ṅeh*: milk; 2. - *riṅ*, form of *rī* signifying woman; *e*: genitive case; *riṅ-e tēh*: the ceremony of the woman.) When a woman cannot have a child, the pucu performs this *tēh*, usually on a Tuesday, to "chase away the unlucky spirit which is possessing her and preventing her from becoming pregnant". The pucu recites: *ćhō-dā, prah-dā noh-dā, krōlu-pucu.*

Gravel is collected from a stream and brought to the house. Rice flour is fried, then ground down to a very fine powder. The pucu recites a *mantra* which he alone knows whilst blowing on the lower part of the back of the sterile woman. Then he throws the gravel at this part of the body "to chase away the spirit which is in the body of the woman". Six

or seven small bunches of dry mountain bamboo stems are then lit. The very fine powder of fried rice, thrown in the direction of the flames which are consuming the bamboo, burns like a firework in a thousand small sparks. The aim is to "frighten the spirit and to chase it out of the house". Then, a goat is sacrificed and its blood drunk by the woman. She also takes a medicine made from 108 herbs fried in clarified butter made from cow's milk, then crushed into a powder.[APPENDIX E]

B. - THE RITUAL OF THE KLIHBRĨ.

I. - General.

Before describing the klihbrĩ's ritual, I must remind the reader of the difficulty in obtaining verifiable information on this subject. For every history told by the klihbrĩ, I will give (in quotes) the summary dictated to me by my informant, it having been impossible for me to confirm the precise text. In contrast, the description of the physical rites are based on direct observation.

The horoscopic system used by the klihbrĩ is very close to that of the pucu. Note however that the colours of the four cardinal points differ in the systems of the pucu and klihbrĩ.

	Klihbrĩ	Pucu
East	blue-green	blue-green
South	red	white
West	black	red
North	white	black

In their overall shape, the plan of the ceremonies of the klihbrĩ and the pucu are similar: they start with offerings to the gods and to the ancestors, recitation of histories, accompanied with by manual rites, and sacrifices. The aim of the ceremony is to control the evil spirits which trouble the peace of men.

2. - Ceremonies.

tha-sõ wa-ba tẽh.

(*tha*: sort of unlucky spirits; *sõ*: three; *wa-ba*: to chase, to expel). This ceremony is done twice a year in every house, in the months of Baisakh and Katik, to chase away the three *tha* and bring back luck and good health to the house. The Klihbrī recites:

- *kleh chue-ba* (*kleh*: master, possessor, owner; *chue-ba*: verb derived from *chuh* or *cuh*, offering of grain made to the *kleh*).

- *me-dã* "An old woman, Umi-ṅe-ma (*umi* from *umer*: old; *ṅe*: cf. kinship terms; *ma*: mother) encountered fire in the village of Krõ. She carried it into the house. Fire helps man, it warms and guides him".

- *ćõh-dã* (*ćõh*: tripod put in the fireplace). "That the tripod that was made at the crossroads make this house rich and happy".

- *phai-dã* (*phai* could be old name for *kota*: room in the house where one finds the fireplace). "If an old man is found sitting in the *phai*, it is good, as the men and children must behave fittingly. If children play in the *phai-ro* in the evening, (in modern Gurung: *parhgõ*), it is pleasant to see. If it is not so, it is not good. That the people in this house be seemly and pleasant."

- *si-dã* (*si* may be the old Gurung word for rice. Nowadays, husked rice is called *mlah-si*). During this *pe*, rice is offered to the gods. "That sickness leave the body, the eyes and the head of X....."

- *prah-dã* (*prah*: yeast). "*prah* was created in the village of Cõ. An old woman Sardam-śyo (*śyo* indicates a woman) hit upon the idea of *prah*. She carried some grains to the four cardinal points, sowed them....harvested them and made *prah* from them. That *prah* be offered to the ancestors."

- *noh-dā* (*noh* may be the old name for *pa*, alcohol made from grain). "This *pe* tells how Sardam-śyo made *pa*. That *pa* be offered to the ancestors."

- *klihko-ba* (*klih* may be a contraction of klih-bri). The klihbrī recites a mantra which must protect him from attack by unlucky spirits.

- *tōh-dā* (*tōh*: the territory of a village). The klihbrī names all the place-names of the village and offers rice grains to the gods and spirits which live in these different places.

- *tha kra-ba* (*kra-ba*: to take). "The three *tha* were created in the village of Krō. When they were nearing the land of Lobaecahkiracah, the villagers tried to chase them away. A woman knocked against a stone and fell. Whilst she was convalescing, a ray of sunshine struck her on her left side. A child came out, and two others were born out of her nostrils. They died and became the three *tha*. A vulture ate their flesh. (It is a bad sign to get the vulture's excrement on oneself). A horse was sent to kill the three *tha* (from that date, horses have had teeth.) One *tha* escaped by hiding behind some herbs called *tha-dhū* (herbs which it is necessary to bring in order to perform *tha-sō wa-ba*)."

- *tha-sō wa-thē-ba*: "to seize and hunt the *tha*" and *gra khe-ba* (*gra*: bad luck; *khe-ba*: to read). "That the nine misfortunes leave this house."

- *pruh-dā* (*pruh* could be the old word for *kyu*: water). "That the water purify the house." The house is sprinkled with water.

In front of the klihbrī, nine statuettes of rice are placed in a line on a winnowing-tray. Nine sorts of grain are shaken nine or seven times according to the sex, around the heads of the members of the family and put into in a goat's horn. Then the klihbrī, holding a burning hot stone with tongs in one hand and the horn in the other, crosses his arms three times in front of him, whilst saying the name of the nine misfortunes. Finally, he puts the two objects on a square basketwork tray (*citra*) made from strips of mountain bamboo. He adds the nine rice statuettes and carries the tray onto the gallery of the house. All the members of the

family clean themselves briefly, head, arms and legs, with water which is poured on the *citra*. The latter is then carried to the crossroads at the exit of the village.

plah-wi la-ba tēh.

(*plah*: soul; *la-ba*: to make). The klihbrī usually performs this *tēh* when a sick person is not in *parga soī, lih, khā* or *gē*. "It is in a place called the country of Kugyal-lamae-la (*ku*: (?); *gyal*: king ;[15] *lama*: lama; *la*: god (*lha*, tib.) where the klihbrī must "go to find" the lost soul of the sick person". He recites the same *pe* as for *tha-sō wa-ba* until *tōh-dā*, which is included. Then, he goes "to look", "to catch the soul" (*plah kra-ba* or *plah kī-ba*). At the start of the ceremony, he has modelled nine cones from rice paste symbolising "the gods of the mountain", the largest symbolising Guru-rhimarce (tib. *gu-ru rin-po-čhe*: Padmasambhava).

When the klihbrī goes to look for the soul, a man gets hold of a chicken. When it flaps its wings, that is the proof that the soul has been recovered and is there. Earlier, the priest "has reached" the country of Kugyal-lamae-la, and a chicken has been sacrificed. The soul having come back, the klihbrī ties a thread around the neck of the sick person and the onlookers cry: *syae* ("We have it" {the soul}).

li wa-ba tēh.

(Cf. *li-wa-ba* of the pucu). The soul of the sick person is in the hands of the spirit Ghaesar-phi. The ceremony takes place on a Tuesday, when the person is in *parga lih* or *khā*. The klihbrī recites the *pe* of *tha-sō wa-ba* until, and including, *tōh-dā*, then he tells the *pe* of *ghaesar-phi*. The klihbrī models a statuette of the spirit from millet paste. He sacrifices a cock and offers its blood to Ghaesar-phi in exchange for the soul. Some food is shaken over the sick man's head, put into his mouth, then taken out and given to the statuette. "I give you my own food,

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[15] Kugyal is possibly a deformation of Pu-gyel, name of the ancestor-king of Tibet; cf. D.L. SNELLGROVE, *Buddhist Himalaya*, p.129.

spirit!". The statuette and the food offered are then carried to the crossroads.

toh thi-ba tẽh.

(*tõh*: territory of the village, wood). This ceremony is done when the cattle are not breeding well. It takes place on a Tuesday or a Saturday. The klihbrī recites the *pe* of *tha-sõ wa-ba* until, and including, *tõh-dã*. A cock is sacrificed to the master of the woods (*tõh-kleh*).

so-pla wa-ba tẽh.

(*so-pla*: "a kind of spirit"; *so-pla* could also be analysed as *so*: breath and *pla* : from *plah*: soul). If the crops are bad, the inhabitants of a house ill, and the spirits work unremittingly against a household, one does this *tẽh*, on a Sunday. The klihbrī recites the *pe* of *tha-sõ wa-ba* up to, and including, *tõh-dã*; he then adds *syab ɲueh-ba* (*syab* could be the spirit of a man who died by falling down a mountain; *ɲueh-ba* from *ɲue-ba*: to ask). The klihbrī calls the evil spirits by their names and tells them to go. Three statuettes of rice representing the three spirits *so-pla* (?) are placed in front of him. Nine species of grain are shaken around the sick person's head, then thrown on a small triangular pyre made with three pieces of wood ranged on each side. The three statuettes are put on the three sides of the triangle. All are burnt in the fire and the ashes are carried to the crossroads.

kimro tẽh.

The sick person being in *parga soṫ* or *gẽ*, the ceremony develops rather like the *plah-wi la-ba*. But here, the klihbrī "goes to look" in a number of places and, in particular, at the crossroads, for the lost soul. A cock is finally sacrificed to the master of the crossroads.

lu thi-ba tēh.

(*lu*: snake; I think it is necessary to compare this word to *klu* (tib.) which is a name given to some snakes [16]). The illness is due to the snake *naga* which causes swellings and pustules. The klihbrī officiates on the morning before breakfast. He recites the histories of *tha-sō wa-ba*, until, and including, *toh-da*, then invokes the names of the kings and queens of the *nāga*.

The klihbrī has in front of him: a statuette of wheat paste, representing a snake, some honey, some sugar, some *kyuh-mi* (beans resembling "sheep's eyes"), *narwana* (coconut), gold and silver, some flours, some *kloprome* (beans), some milk of either cow or goat. The statuette of the snake is put into a clay pot and thrown into the water with all the other things, as an offering to the *nāga*.

chyop chue-ba tēh.

During this ceremony, "one addresses oneself to a bountiful spirit, *chyop* (?), so that it helps the family to resolve its material difficulties, to stop a landslide, etc.". The klihbrī recites the *pe* of *tha-sō wa-ba* until *toh-da*, then that of *chyop*. This last history tells "how, at Ulsokersa, a brother and sister lived meditating in a cave (*agradog*). A lama lived in another cave (*ugradog*). The lama threw a brilliant ball which fell in front of the sister. The latter eat it and found herself to be pregnant. The people of the village nearby thought that the brother and sister had committed incest and chased them away. Lar-phi-rini, the sister had a son who started to eat like a giant. When the brother came in, he saw this giant and succeeded in controlling it. Since this day, it has become a beneficent spirit which helps mankind". The klihbrī has in front of him a statuette representing the giant, which is conical in shape, weighing from 4 to 5 kilos. The priest says in order the names of the stopping places which one encounters on the path going up to Kersa where the giant lives. Then, he "brings him back" and sacrifices a cock to him, saying "protect us!". The blood is sprinkled onto the statuette.

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[16] D.L. SNELLGROVE, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

Finally, the klihbrī again recites the names of the stopping places on the path which goes to Kersa "to lead back" the giant.

la chue-ba tēh.

(*la*: god). Once a year, the klihbrī particularly honours his gods and ancestors. The ceremony can take place in the month of Pus, Chait or Baisakh, a day of the full moon. The priest recites the same *pe* as for *chyop chue-ba tēh*. He makes a huge statue symbolising a god, weighing more than eight kilos (two or three *pathi* of rice), conical in shape. A goat is sacrificed. At the end of the ceremony, thread is put round the necks of all the members of the family.

C. - FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Whilst studying the society, we have stressed the prime importance of funerals among Gurung ceremonies. This ceremony is, without doubt, the most significant in the eyes of the Gurungs, from both social and religious viewpoints. In fact, during funerals, the social and religious blend in such a complex and logical manner that it would, to my way of thinking, be unnecessary, even wrong, to want to delineate them systematically in order to analyse the Gurung perspective. In the funeral ceremony, all Gurung beliefs and institutions are found together, complete, and explained. The lama, pucu and klihbrī priests officiate side by side, a feature which is not found in any other ceremony. Funerals reunite not only the family (in the restricted sense that we have chosen for our study) but also the members of the clan of the deceased living in other villages in the valley, persons from allied clans, and finally those persons from any clan which is, more or less, bound by friendship to the dead person or his family. Funerals affirm both relations of kinship between people who are connected with the deceased, and the relationships between clans and between villages, these relationships taking all their significance from a religious context which encompasses many varying beliefs.

Funerals take place at two points: the burial of the body and the *pae* (cf. p. 281 *sq.*). The burial is called *mih wa-bae keh* (*mih*: man; *wa-ba*: to expel, to remove; *e*: genitive particle; *keh*: work, all that is

necessary to finish the task completely). They also use the expression *si kra keh* (*si*: dead; *kra* from *kra-ba* (?): to go to find). The ceremony during which the priests indicate to the dead man's soul the way leading to the place where he will find the souls of his ancestors is called the *pae*. There is not, to my knowledge, a precise term which describes both ceremonies at once.

The kind of ceremony performed when a Gurung dies is determined by several factors:

- the clan of the deceased
- the age of the deceased
- the date of death
- the wealth of the deceased.

- *The clan of the deceased.*

We have already said that two kinds of priests are always present at funerals: the lama and the pucu, or the klihbrī and the pucu, the pucu in both cases being called to officiate. On the other hand, the family of the deceased is free to chose between the lama and the klihbrī. The lama is, nowadays, often preferred to the klihbrī. Usually the lama officiates for the Carjat clan. For the deceased of the *lama* clan, a lama priest is always summoned. Traditionally the priest of the ancient *ghale* kings was the klihbrī, and the latter is usually called to officiate at the death of a *ghale*. Solahjat families chose between the lama and klihbrī, but more and more they show a preference for lamas. If the dead man belongs to a klihbrī clan, the latter officiate. Finally, if the dead man is from a pucu clan, the lama is generally chosen, but often the klihbrī is also invited, the three priests, pucu, lama and klihbrī thus participating at the ceremony.

- *The age of the deceased.*

As we have already said, the funerals of children and adolescents are much simplified. The *pae* is not performed. At the time of burial, one of the three priests comes to say some prayers. Full funerals are performed when a person has achieved his full status, that of a married person. However, it is necessary to mention that one of the *pe* of the pucu

(*Lemku*), tells of the funeral of a young, unmarried, man of great intelligence, called to assist the king in the administration of public affairs. The king, in recognition of services rendered by the deceased, allowed the full funeral rites to be performed.

- *The date of death.*

The body is always buried very quickly. But a *pae* is never performed during the heavy agricultural season which lasts from May until September. The villagers are too busy in the fields to be able to organise a *pae* and nobody would have the time to help.

- *The wealth of the deceased.*

The burial of a poor person and of a rich person are almost identical. However, poor families only call one priest to officiate at the burial. In contrast, the date of the *pae* is usually fixed according to the wealth of the family. In many families, especially poor ones, it never takes place. In other families, they often wait until two or three people have died before performing only one *pae*. This is in order to be able to collect the necessary sum of money for the ceremony, which costs between 250 and 1,500 rupees (one day's work brings in 1.5 rupees plus a meal). In fact, the ceremony lasts for two to three days and sometimes hundreds of people take part in it. From amongst these a certain number are fed by the family of the deceased. Several lamas, pucus or klihbrīs officiate. Thus, although theoretically the *pae* should take place with 49 days after the death, it is very rare that this is done. [112] More often, the *pae* only takes place two or three years later. The Gurungs prefer not to celebrate the *pae* at all rather than to organise it without the traditional munificence.

I. - The Burial.

The burial is done in the twelve hours following death. If a person dies in the evening, the burial is completed at daybreak. Let me say in passing that cremation is very rare. It is costly and only done by well-off families (who often go and burn their dead on the river bank, following the Nepalo-Indian rite). At Mohoriya, there was a stone

fireplace for burning in the cemetery. The burial ceremony differs according to whether the pucu-lama pair or the pucu-klihbrī pair officiate. We will look at both kinds in turn.

a) *Burial performed by the pucu and lama.*

The relatives of the deceased come bringing offerings of food. The women of the family or the women neighbours proceed to wash the body. This is covered in a white sheet (*tala* or *tal*). Whilst the body is still inside the house, the pucu starts the funeral ceremony, sitting on the gallery. He recites a *mantra* to protect himself from evil spirits, then he chants *si-ra-ćha-ra*, a *pe* which reminds the dead of his new state and describes to him, broadly, the ceremony that is going to follow, which has always been performed by the ancestors of the pucus. It is then that the lama enters the scene. He prays beside the dead person, inside the house. Near the head of the body, he puts a necklace of black beads, a conch shell, and a small bell, a *vajra*, then he reads a *mantra* and other prayers. Outside, a relative called *tah-kral* (cf. p. 284) begins to make the *a-lā* which is composed principally of a long pole of mountain bamboo about eight arms in length. At the top, he attaches a bunch of flowers into which he slips grains of fried rice. A little below this, he wraps material for a turban, if the deceased is a man, and a head scarf in the case of a woman. He also fixes leaves from a tree representing the hair of the dead person on the pole and, depending on the sex of the deceased, an arrow or a shuttle, a tobacco pouch or a purse, the clothing called a *rhaṅ* and a knife or a piece of material used to cover the lower part of the body. Finally, a little lower down, are attached red, blue, black and white ribbons respectively, which flutter in the wind. Often some fruit is added in the guise of food and the hair-leaves are smeared with clarified butter. Once it is ready, the *a-lā* is fixed vertically to the wall of the house, its top being above the height of the wall. Then the pucu beats different rhythms on his drum (*dum-dum-ti*). Some bits of the dead person's nails, hair and sometimes a small piece of the tongue, are put away in a small bamboo tube (*rih-tu mah-tu*; *rih*: large bamboo; *mah*: mountain bamboo; *tu* is perhaps a form of *dhū* which is applied to all things made of wood and cylindrical) and secretly buried by the priest in

the dead person's village [17]. During this time inside the house, the lama has made four rice cakes (*kaṭ-du*; *kaṭ*: food, cooked rice) offered to "four Buddhas" (?) which are placed near the dead person's head. Then the lama goes out onto the gallery and reads a long sequence of prayers [18].

During this reading by the lama, the body is brought from the house. It is laid out on a stretcher (fig. 32), the hands along the side of the body, the legs bent vertically, the heels against the buttocks.

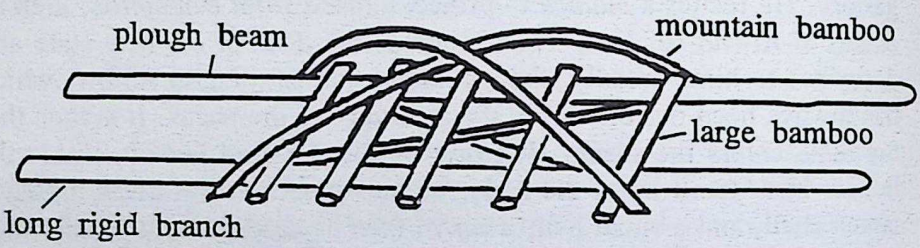

Figure 32 - Diagram of stretcher used for carrying the dead.

Then the procession of relatives follows the *tah-kral* carrying the *a-lā*, the lama and two men carrying the stretcher, towards the cemetery. At Mohoriya this is at the south of the village, on steeply sloping, stony, wooded ground. Piles of stone indicate the position of graves scattered about in the undergrowth. Usually graves belonging to the same family are grouped together. The body is put naked into a hole dug by the men of the village, who are not always members of the family of the de-

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[17] The tube must be buried secretly because, according to Gurung belief, a witch could exert a malevolent influence against a man, if she is in possession of things having been part of the body of that man.

[18] I will not give here a list of the books which are read as they vary according to the informant. Each of the Gurung "village lamas" only has a few Tibetan books. They only read those which they possess and are, for the most part, ignorant of orthodox lamaist ritual.

ceased. The lama reads several prayers. Grains of rice and some coins (for the purchase of the land, cf. p. 369) are thrown by the relatives of the deceased.

The stretcher is left on the grave once the corpse has been covered with earth. The *a-lã* is then destroyed. On the return from the cemetery, the lama chases the nine evil spirits (*tha-ku*), which might have come in under cover of death, from the house of the dead person. He makes nine *kaĩ-du* symbolising the nine evil spirits and twelve *kaĩ-du* representing the twelve *lho* (years of the cycle). All the family wash their feet; then, with the lama, they carry the rice statuettes placed on a basketwork tray as far as the exit to the village. There they add three objects which are to frighten away evil spirits (a bow, tongs for holding a burning stone, and a thorn) and a goat's horn into which grains, that have previously been waved round the heads of the members of the family, have been put. For at least nine days, the lama comes daily to pray for a few moments in the house of mourning. The soul of the dead person remains in the vicinity of the house during the three days following death. The third day, the pucu takes the food offered by the dead person's relatives near to the cemetery (*proh so-ba*). At the end of that day, the soul begins to wander in the village, the fields, and the woods, until the ceremony of the *pae*, the conclusion of the funerals. Until then, it can fall into the hands of evil spirits or itself become a harmful spirit.

b) *Burial performed by a pucu and a klihbrĩ.*

In this second type of burial, the pucu plays the same role as in the preceding case. The klihbrĩ prays inside the house beside the dead person. Some food is placed beside the deceased; ten rice statuettes (cf. p. 393) are modelled and placed in front of the priest beside the offerings of grain. The klihbrĩ recites successively:

- *si-ra ćha-ra*, in which the meaning differs little from the *si-ra ćha-ra* of the pucu.

- *mahne la-ba* (cf. p. 378)

- *nah-syo* (*ñah*: klihbrī's drum). This *pe* tells the origin of the drum and its power. A goat is sacrificed as the *pe* explains that, thanks to this sacrifice, the drum can vibrate. Moreover, the latter is covered with goat-skin. After this *pe*, the klihbrī recites to the rhythm of the drum:

- *sirlo tohrlo*. This *pe*, which is summarised in another chapter (cf. p. 390), seems to give a mythical precedent to the funerals. A second history is often added to the first. It recounts how "there was a family named *pleh-mai* (*pleh*: rich (?); *mai*: men) who were expert in matters of hunting. They had a very good hunting dog. When it died, its masters decided to celebrate its funeral. The klihbrī dissuaded them. - But this dog has fed us, he was like our father and mother, they replied. The priest cursed them since they refused to follow his advice: May your family be exterminated!"

- *chaẽ phel-ba* (*chaẽ*: unlucky spirit; *phel-ba*: to separate). "The soul is separated, removed from the evil spirits."

- *cha kra-ba pleh kra-ba*. "The klihbrī asks the dead person not to take long life and good luck away with him and to leave it with his family."

- *tõh-ba*. "Relatives of the dead person bring offerings of food (bread, fried rice, grains, etc.). The klihbrī says to the soul: X. brings you food. Take it and eat it."

- *ćõh zhõ-ba* (*ćõh*: tripod; *zhõ-ba*: to lay). The body of the dead person is put for an instant on the tripod which covers the fireplace.

- *huir-te-ba* (*huir-ba*: to go and find, to call; *te-ba*: to put into). The body of the deceased is carried onto the terrace and the klihbrī turns three times round it, anticlockwise, dancing as he does this. The beating of the drum, then of the drum and cymbals, accompanies the dance which continues during:

- *pho-dã*. "Thanks to the beating of the drum and to the dance, the evil spirits are separated from the dead person." The klihbrī recites

pho-dā four times, once near the dead person's head, once at the feet, once on the left side, and once on the right. Then, he circles round the body seven times, dancing to seven different rhythms. The procession then finally turns towards the cemetery [19]. On arrival, the klihbrī recites:

- *sa kloh-ba* (*sa*: earth; *kloh-ba*: to buy). The klihbrī buys from the spirit master of the cemetery the earth where the grave is to be dug. Some coins are thrown onto the ground. Afterwards, the *moh* (cf. p.287) digs the grave, then the stretcher is lifted up and the klihbrī turns again three times around it. The role of the priest stops there; it is for the *tah-kral* and the *moh* to complete the burial ceremony (cf. p. 283). Properly speaking the klihbrī is not present at the burial. Once back at the house of the dead person, he performs *tha-sõ wa-ba* (cf. p. 357-358) to chase away the evil spirits which the death of the deceased has drawn into the house.

2. - The pae.[20]

Theoretically, the *pae* must take place between the thirtieth and forty-ninth day following the death. Until the day of the *pae*, the soul of the dead person wanders because it is ignorant of the path it must follow to reach the country where the souls of his ancestors live. Only the priest can lead him there as they know the way and know how to wrestle against the evil spirits which want to keep the dead person's soul. Some pucus and klihbrīs believe that if the *pae* has not taken place before the forty-ninth day, the soul begins a series of transmigrations into the bodies of animals or vegetables, a series which ends, one day, with the return to the human form. We will come back later to the problems posed by these beliefs. To fix the date of the *pae*, the pucus usually go by the

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[19] Sometimes a piece of white cloth, six to seven arms in length, is fixed to the *a-lā*, and held vertically in length by two or three forked pieces of wood carried by men from the village who walk in front of the *tah-kral*. According to my informants, "this cloth is used to clear the road of evil spirits which would attack the dead person".

[20] Cf. my disc "Au pied de l'Annapurna", *Chant du monde*, LD.S.8245. (Recordings of the prayers recited by the pucus, klihbris and lamas. Descriptions of drums, cymbols, trumpets. Photos).

decision of the lama, who consults his Tibetan calendar. However, it is customary to consider that a *pae* cannot begin on the day of the full moon. The explanations of the pucus and klihbrīs as to the manner of determining the date of a *pae* are so obscure and contradictory that it seems they have no rigid system. As with the burial, I will examine successively the *pae* as done by the pucu-lama, then that of the pucu-klihbrī.

a) *Pae performed by the pucu and the lama.*

There are two kinds of *pae*: the *khewa pae* "which only lasts one night" and the *rho pae* "which takes place over three nights". The *pae* can begin at any hour of the day. In fact, most of the *pae* with the pucu and the lama begin in the morning and last until the evening of the following day, after which the audience dance and sing throughout the night. During the *khewa pae* no sacrifice is offered.

The following description is that of a *rho pae* with sacrifices, performed for a dead man and beginning in the morning. The lama and the pucu each officiate in a different place (the two places being contiguous), without being disturbed one by the other. As I have said before, I will refrain from talking about the lamaist ritual. However, I will quickly describe three instances of a *pae* done by the lama, which will be useful for our study since they involve persons other than the lama priests. During the first afternoon, the widow comes to kneel at the foot of the symbolic image of her husband (*plah*, which I will describe later), and, sobbing loudly, asks the soul to come and eat all the food which it is offered. A little later, the lamas come onto the terrace and begin to turn clockwise around the *plah*, chanting a prayer in which they ask the soul of the dead man to come and join them. The son of the deceased follows them carrying a strung bow and arrow on his head. He wears a quiver full of arrows across his back. According to my informants, the aim is to threaten the evil spirits which are trying to prevent the soul from approaching. The *tah-kral* carries the *a-lā* (identical to the one made for the burial) which has been prepared in the morning. Several female relatives of the dead man join the lamas.

Then the procession moves through the village towards the place where the bamboo tube containing the nails and hair of the dead man, cut during the burial, is hidden. Food and fire are left on the path so that the

soul of the dead man "will find hospitality" when he comes to the village, and the participants return to the house.

Towards midnight, the lamas call the soul for the last time. Butter lamps are blown out. A bowl half filled with water is put at the foot of the *plah* (to which has been added the bamboo tube) and covered with linen. All the priests and their assistants begin to beat their instruments with a fantastic rhythm and a deafening noise. Their eyes close; the features of their faces contract. This is the only moment of the ceremony during which the onlookers are silent and attentive. After several crescendos and diminuendos, calm returns; the lamps are relit. A lama lifts up the linen covering the bowl of water and looks at it. "Yes! the soul has come; the soul is there. Look at this drop at the edge of the surface of the water. The soul has returned in the form of a bird and it has quenched its thirst", he says.

Whilst the lamas are officiating, the pucus have begun to perform their *pae*, usually under a shelter covered with mountain bamboo mats. Very early in the morning, they have gone with the relatives and allied kin of the dead man to carry some food near to the cemetery as they had done the third day after the burial. Then, with two drums, the *dum-dum-ti* and the *tu-ti* (cf. the disc), the priests play different rhythms together "in order to warn the world of gods, spirits and souls that the *pae* is beginning". During this time, the family of the dead man bring what is necessary in the way of offerings to be made to the ancestors of the pucus (three *pathi* of grain and one rupee), to the male ancestors of the dead man (nine cakes, *kēh*, and a small wooden bottle full of alcohol made from rice) and to his female ancestors (seven handfuls of rice and alcohol). The pucu reads *si-ra ćha-ra* as at the burial.

Then, the *plah* is dressed. It is made by the *moh*. On the wooden framework of the *plah* [21] (fig. 33) which is about 70 cm. high, similar objects to those which were fixed to the *a-lā* are placed in such a way that they cover the wooden frame. The clothes in which the *plah* is dressed are similar to those worn by the dead person. Recently several rich families have used, as a form of *plah* for a *pae*, a small plaster figure, seated on a chair. The *pe* entitled "*plahe pe*" which the pucu

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[21] The history of the *plah* indicates the different species of wood which must be used. Each type corresponds to a part of the body of the dead person.

recites while the *plah* is being made, shows how important it is that it is living. In this *pe*, the *plah* was so perfect that it "spoke, ate and walked".

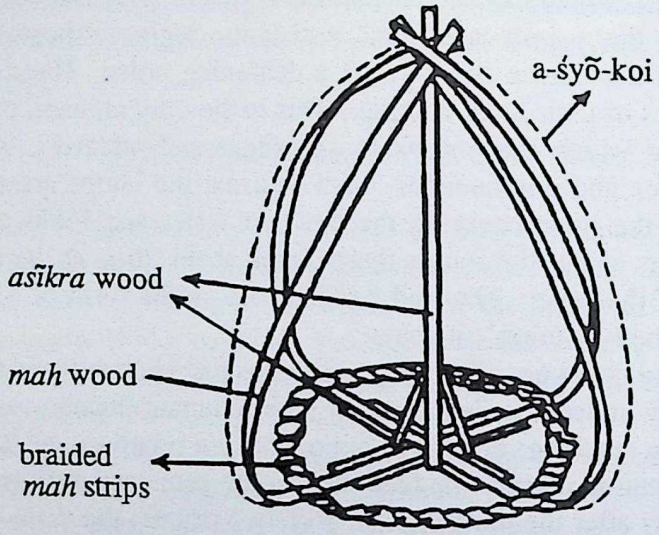


Figure 33 - Diagram of a *plah*

In these descriptions of the ceremonies of the pucu and of the klihbrĩ, we have often come across the word *plah* in the sense of "soul" (cf. tib., *bla*). We have said, for example, that the illness of a man is caused by the departure of one of his nine souls (*plah-ku*). The same word *plah* is used to denote the construction which is being described as it represents, for the living, the soul of the dead man in concrete form. When the wandering soul of the deceased has been found by the priest, it comes to inhabit the *plah*. To make the resemblance more real, the bamboo tube containing the hair and nails is put into the *plah*. In the *pae* performed by the pucu and the klihbrĩ, a chicken is placed inside the *plah* to give it *so* (cf. tib., *srog*: life) breath, that is to say life.

The evocative power of the *plah* is considerable. I do not think I distort Gurung thought in saying that the *plah* makes the dead person appear to be alive in the eyes of the onlookers. It affirms the life of the deceased. The dead person is there in the middle of everybody. The

widow collapses at the foot of the *plah*, overcome with grief. She seizes the *plah* and, in a voice broken with sobs, cries out: "Why have you left us?....Stay with us....Do not leave!". All those watching feel the presence of the deceased. The *pae* takes the form of a dramatic dialogue between the dead person and the priests and, more generally, the onlookers.

Except for a few seconds when it is carried in front of the lamas, the *plah* remains on the terrace, placed on a folding bed and protected by a roof of bamboo matting. The pucu performs the major part of the rites of the *pae* near the *plah*, either sitting still or turning around it.

The second phase of the *pae* of the pucu starts with:

- *simru thi-ba* (*si*: dead; *thi-ba*: to look for and invite ?). The pucu invites the soul to come and join in the *pae* being performed for it. To help it to respond to this invitation, the pucu strives to find it again and seize it from the hands of the spirits. To the offerings of grain mentioned above are added three *pathi* of various cereals, a half *pathi* of rice and some fried grains of rice which are offered to the various instruments used by the pucu, such as his drum, his cymbals etc.

The priest recites:

- *si-ra ćha-ra*.

- *cho-dā*.

- *rhī-mar-ku ćēh-mar-ku* (*mar*: gold (?); *ku*: nine (?)). This *pe* tells the origin of the basket called *rhī-mar-ku ćēh-mar-ku* which the pucu uses for the offerings of grain (*acheta*) and certain of his instruments.

- *śyaku* [*kh-hun*] (cf. p. 91). This history tells the origin of the "rain shield". [113]

- *me-dā*.

- *prah-dā noh-dā*.

- *phū-dā*. This *pe* tells the origin of *phū* or *fū*.

- *tih-dā* (*tih*: the incense for unlucky spirits). This *pe* tells the origin of the *tih(ī)*, the incense burnt for unlucky spirits. (This is a dried plant gathered in the high pastures).

- *hyul kor-ba* (*hyul*: country; *kor-ba*: to travel around; tib., *yul'khor-ba* {skor-ba}). The pucu searches for the soul while naming all the place-names of the village. A chicken is sacrificed and offered to the female spirit Sar-phi-rhini in exchange for the soul which the spirit helps to recover.

Then, the pucu calls the names of the ancestors of the dead man one by one, at each name striking with a green leaf which he smears with grain alcohol and milk. He then throws it while saying: "Soul, go and meet your ancestors, they come to you". The *moh* gathers the remaining leaves and cries out: "Soul, may the doors of the land of Krõ (the country where the souls of his ancestors are) open in front of you". With this rite, the first day of the pucu *pae* ends. As we have previously described, this *pae* cannot begin until the lama is sure that the soul has arrived, which does not usually happen before midnight.

The next day the third phase begins, during which the pucu chants *serka*. This chant continues nearly all the day. During this phase of the *pae*, the pucu "accompanies" the soul of the deceased towards the land of Krõ. After the history of the *plah*, the pucu recites that of:

- *pa-dū ma-dū chyā-ba* (*pa*: father; *ma*: mother; *chyā-ba*: beautiful): tells the origin of the "beautiful" drum *dum-dum-ti* which is only played during funerals (during the *pae* the pucu does not use his drum *ṅah*).

- *herga chyā-ba*: tells the origin of one other "beautiful" drum. My informants have affirmed that this drum was the *ṅah*, which is unlikely, as it is the *pe ṅahr-dõ* which tells the origin of the *ṅah*, and anyway the *ṅah* is not used during the *pae*. I think rather that *herga chyā-bae pe* tells the origin of the *tu-ti* or of another drum which has disappeared and which the *tu-ti* has replaced.

- *sel-jyõ chyā-ba*: describes the origin of the "beautiful" cymbals.

- *me-dā.*

- *prah-dā noh-dā.*

- *phū-dā chyā-ba.*

- *lem-ku* (*lem*: clever). This *pe* tells of how Lemku died and how they performed his *pae*.

- *hoi-dā chyā-ba* (*hoi* or *hoĩ*: flower). This *pe* contains a series of phrases which are constructed in the same way: "As the flower X... fades, (soul), fade away!".

- *rimai khagyura prahwai teṅai.* No informant could tell me exactly what this meant. The meaning of the *pe* seems to be as follows: "There is that which is done according to custom (*pe*) and that which is not done according to custom. That a [classificatory] son, for example, may be older than his father, that is "*prahwai teṅai pe*", that a father may be older than his son that is "*rimai khagyura pe*". Likewise, for the soul of the deceased, there is a route which leads to the land of the ancestors and that which does not lead there."

- *kleh-tuh caẽ-tuh.* In place of *tuh*, one also finds *ku*, which allows one to translate this title as "the nine *kleh* (masters) and the nine *caẽ* (evil spirits)". The pucu "separates" the soul from several *caẽ* and thus helps it to go along the road leading to Krõ.

- *si-lu mah-lu* (*si*: dead; *mah*: lost). This *pe* can be summarised thus: "Everything has an end; everything dies. Do not be full of bitterness. Leave to the living what is theirs and take that which belongs to the dead."

- *bida danā* (nep.: to say goodbye). This *pe* means: "Death, your place is not amongst us, the living. Leave, and may the ancestors of the pucus escort you into the land of the dead."

- *syo mai sa-tẽ-ba* (*sa-tẽ-ba*: to be carried off whilst remaining). On leaving the house where the *pae* is taking place, the pucu precisely

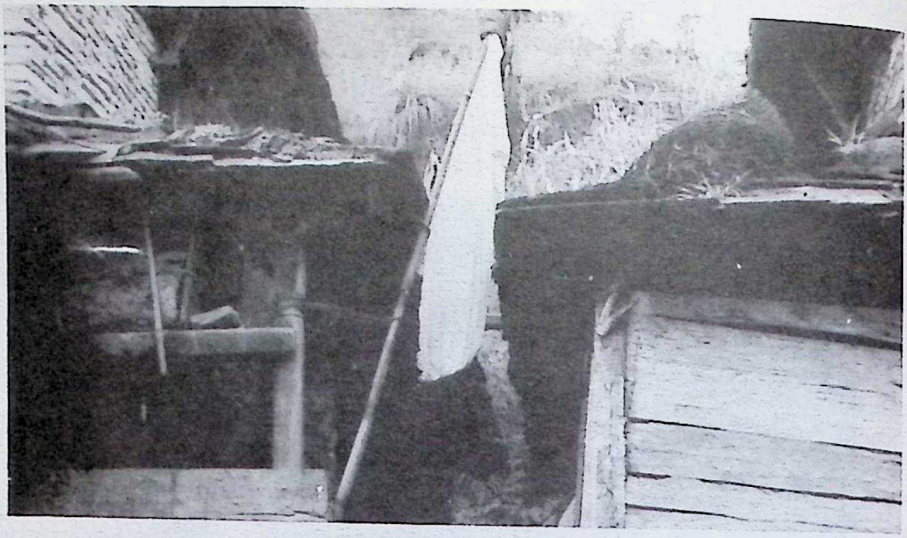
indicates all the stages which he "passes over" with the soul of the deceased to arrive at the country where the souls of the ancestors live, then, when it has reached this, the pucu indicates the stages which he "passes over" on the return road as far as the house of the deceased. Whilst the soul is making for the land of the dead, the pucus who chant the *pae* turn anticlockwise around the *plah* accompanied by the women, both direct kin and relatives by marriage of the deceased, with their hair falling loose on their shoulders. When the soul arrives at the door of Kro, a javelin is thrown onto a plank of *timur* wood "to open the door of the land of the dead". "On the return route", the procession turns in a reverse direction, the women plaiting their hair. Mourning is ended. "Once they come back onto the terrace of the dead person's house", those who have made the journey shake themselves so that there is nothing on them that they may have caught on the road leading to Krõ.

Whilst this last phase of the *pae* takes place, the most respected pucu, and the most knowledgeable among the priests who participate in the ceremony, does *rhil kahe-ba* or *kah-ba* (? to ask to give; ? *kah-ba*: to trap). The pucu asks the deceased if he is satisfied with what his relatives have done for him. If he answers yes, the pucu asks him to leave and forget the world of the living, since he has received "his share". This phase of the *pae* is of very great importance in the eyes of the dead person's relatives. The following is a description of it.

The pucu makes three sorts of statuettes (*kaĩ-du*) (cf. p. 344) which we will call I, II, and III. There are as many *kaĩ-du I* as there are families having a kinship link with the deceased and who are taking part in the funeral. We have already studied in detail the importance of the different relatives of the deceased (*tah*, *ṅe* and *a-syo*). Remember that the materials necessary for making the *kaĩ-du* are given by the *a-śyõ* or, in his absence, by a *ṅe* relative. All the *kaĩ-du* are made from rice boiled in milk, then kneaded. They are parallelepipedal in shape, standing on end, in which the upper section is divided into two joined parts. *kaı-du II* is cylindrical; it is called *kyãh kaĩ-du* or *kyah rhil-kaı-du* (*kyah*: road). It symbolises the route which the soul of the deceased must follow. The two *kaı-du III* are conical. Two or three small twigs are stuck in the top in a fan-like manner, resembling antennae. These two *kaĩ-du* represent the two birds *cha-name* and *pleh-name*, birds of old age and good luck

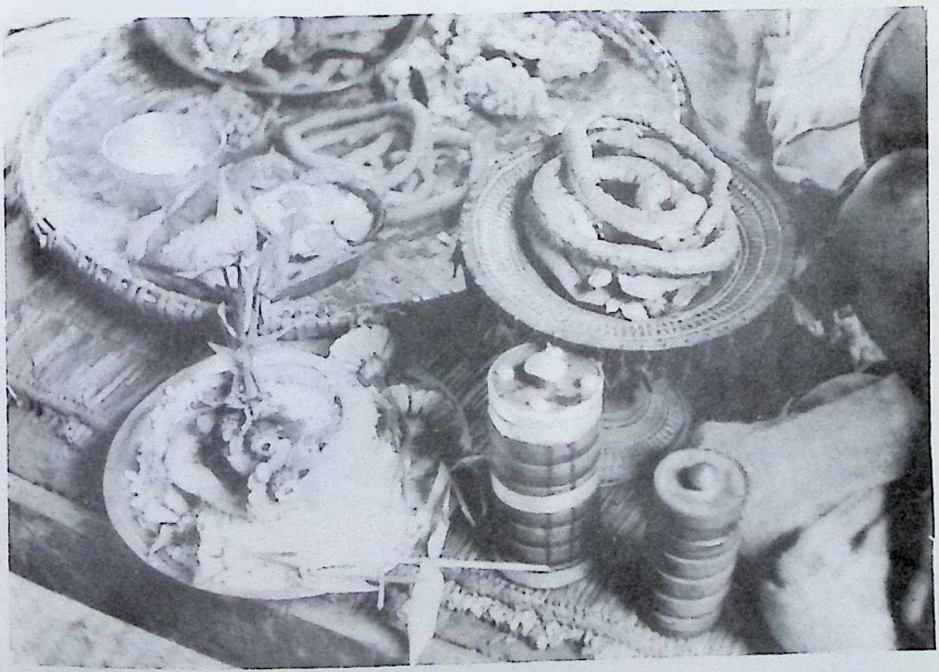
49. Lama officiating during a ceremony of the end of mourning, a *pae*

pae



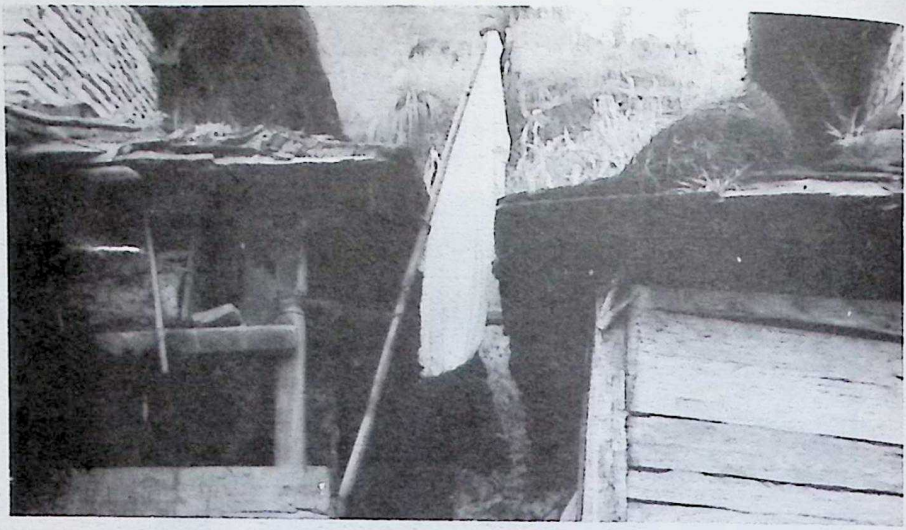
50. The *a-lā*

52. One hundred and eight butter lamps.



53. Offerings placed at the foot of the *plah*

pae



50. The *a-lā*

51. The *plah*

52. One hundred and eight butter lamps.

53. Offerings placed at the foot of the *plah*

54. Relatives circling the *plah*.

55. A woman plaits her hair; mourning is ended.

(sometimes these two *kaĩ-du* are in the shape of a bird). The pucu takes a round, flat, winnowing-tray and puts the *kaĩ-du* on the edge and, by their side, some fermented grain (which is used to make grain alcohol) mixed with egg yolk. In a separate place, he burns a stick of incense (*tihi*) the smell of which is intended to keep away evil spirits who might interfere with the execution of the rite. The heads of the families symbolised by *kaĩ-du I* sit around the pucu, who asks the rest of the audience to keep away. He uncovers his head (doubtless in order to imitate brahmin priests), then, with a stick partially covered with the sticky mixture made from the fermented grains and egg yolk, he lifts up one *kaĩ-du I*. He puts it on a perfectly smooth surface of rice flour which has been spread in the middle of the winnowing-tray and says to the deceased: "X... you have taken his offering. You have received your due. Go now and join the ancestors of this family." Then, with his small stick he gently pushes the upper part of the statuette. If this falls forward, neatly, without leaning a little to one side, this means that the dead man is satisfied with that which the corresponding family have done for him and that he agrees to go "having received his due". (The flour serves to mark an exact imprint of the fall of the statuette). If the *kaĩ-du* falls crookedly, this is a sign that the deceased is unhappy. It is a bad sign for the family whose *kaĩ-du* fall backward. They will have to try to appease his anger. The pucu repeats the same rite with all the statuettes. The statuettes III are carried to and kept in the house of the deceased after the pucu has said: "Soul of the dead, you have had your due, do not take away with you the long life and good luck which lives in this house." The women of the house of the deceased shake with their hands a band made from a strip of mountain bamboo; the symbol of fortune. They indicate by this gesture that the deceased must now go away without taking the house's good luck since he has received his share. The *kaĩ-du*, grain, etc. are enclosed in a small basket made of large green leaves and thrown to the west of the house at the end of the *pae* "where the sun sleeps". *rhil-kaḥe-ba* is the phase of the *pae* which is done with the most formality. It is done in complete silence. All the statuettes which I have seen falling have "fallen well".

The second day comes to an end. The lamas, sometimes accompanied by the pucus, turn clockwise around the *plah*. They are dressed in their grand Tibetan robes. One of them wears a mask, "whose

expression must frighten away unlucky spirits". The lamas read several prayers and wrestle for the last time against the evil spirits who try to prevent the soul of the deceased from reaching the land of the dead. It is at this point that the son of the deceased, drawing his bow, shoots, in succession, two arrows towards the sky "to frighten the evil spirits". Then, all those who have taken part in the *pae* make for a place to the east of the dead person's house. The lamas read a final prayer and the *plah* is destroyed. Its framework is broken up and thrown into the bushes. The *a-śyõ koi* is given to the *moh*. During this time, the son of the deceased has his hair shaven off.

b) *Pae performed by the pucu and the klihbrĩ.*

In the *pae* we have just looked at, the lama and the pucu perform their rites ignoring each other, except at the point when the soul arrives. In the following *pae* the pucu and klihbrĩ arrange it so that they follow a common general order. Let us imagine that the *pae* begins in the evening:

(1) The pucu begins the ceremony by beating a drum, then he says *si-ra ćha-ra* and the *pe* of the *plah* during which the latter is being made.

(2) The klihbrĩ then takes the place of the pucu. The offerings of grain, alcohol, etc. are practically the same for the pucu and the klihbrĩ, but the klihbrĩ makes in addition eighteen rice *kaĩ-du*. He then recites:

- *si-ra ćha-ra*;

- *ćõh-dã*;

- *tõh-dã*;

- *mahne la-ba* (tib., *ma-ṇi*, mantra);

- *ke-the-ba* (open the way). "The soul of the deceased can be in six different places. In exchange for the soul, the blood of a goat must

be offered to the evil spirits who hold the soul prisoner." The *moh* sacrifices a goat.

(3) The pucu then recites *simru thi-ba* to invite the soul to take part in the *pae* (sacrifice of a chicken).

(4) After a short rest, the ceremony resumes at dawn. The klihbrī goes to the village spring where the soul of the deceased has had to come during the night. A part of the offerings of food given to the soul by his kin and relatives by marriage, is burnt and the klihbrī recalls the names of the donors (*rhi-kaĩ bẽ-ba*. *kaĩ*: food; *bẽ-ba*; to give). Then, the klihbrī returns to the house and recites *mahne* (*mantra*) and asks "that the gods forgive the sins committed by the deceased during his earthly life". Then he performs *simru thi-ba*. The klihbrī's ritual differs in detail from that of the pucu. The priest makes a conical *kaĩ-du*, symbolising the deceased. He recites *sirlo thorlo*.

It is midday when the *plah kũ-ba* begins ("to find the soul", *kũ-ba* is perhaps derived from *khu-ba*: to gather). Again, the klihbrī goes to look for the soul, "going" this time to other places, (in particular the cemetery). He recites *ṅahr-dõ*, the history of the drum, *ṅah*, which he will use several times in what follows. He dances around the *plah*, to the rhythm of the drum. Then, he goes for the second time to the village spring in order to look for the tube containing the nails and hair of the deceased (*rhi thẽh-ba, tẽh-ba*). If we compare *rhi thẽ-ba* and *rhi kaĩ bẽ-ba*, we are led to think that, in the morning, the offerings were burnt at the spring because that is where the *rhi* was (tube of bamboo containing the nails). The women have brought offerings of food. The klihbrī dances around the tube, accompanied by the beating of the drum and clashing of cymbals. The tube is then slid into the *plah* on the terrace of the house. The klihbrī recites:

- *chaẽ phel-ba*;

- *kihyal-to-ba* (to go to meet)

- *a-śyõ tal bẽ-ba* (*a-śyõ tal*: cf. p. 283; *bẽ-ba*: to give). This *pe* explains that it is necessary to give *a-śyõ tal* so that the *pae* can be

performed. The clash of cymbals ends this phase. The klihbrī goes off to eat.

(5) The pucu comes back to officiate by performing *cih khol-ba* (to bring). This phase finishes with proof of the arrival of the soul which has finally been found and torn away from the power of the unlucky spirits. (When the pucu officiates with the lama, *cih-khol-ba* is not performed as it is the lama who confirms the arrival of the soul.) The pucu recites: *si-ra ćha-ra, klehpa chue-ba, me-dā, ćhō-dā, prah-dā, noh-dā, rhī-mar-ku, ćēh-mar-ku, śya-ku, tōh kor-ba, pruh-dā, sar-phi-rini* (or *syomai kra-ba*), *mahne la-ba, caē phel-ba.*

To make sure that the soul has arrived, a small wooden arch is made on which a cock or a hen, according to the sex of the dead person, is suspended by one foot. When the bird begins to flap its wings, it is because the soul has touched it and that it is there and inhabits the *plah.*

(6) It is past midnight when the klihbrī follows the pucu. One after the other are done:

- *tōh-ba* (or *tōh kor-ba*);

- *na-ku-kur* (*nakai*: hen). A hen or a cock, according to the sex of the dead person, is put in the centre of the *plah* to give it *so* (tib., *srog*: the breath of life). The bird stays there until *rhil kahe-ba*;

- *thu-dē plah.* A ram or an ewe, according to the sex, is lead onto the terrace. "This sheep is now your *koh*", the klihbrī says to the deceased. We will see later the role played by the *koh*, at least we will try to describe it.

For several hours the priests rest.

(7) On waking, the klihbrī does the *rhil kahe-ba*, the same as the pucu does when he officiates with the lama.

(8) At the same time, the pucu begins to chant *serka.*

(9) The klihbrī again recites: *ćōh-dā, tōh-dā, sirlo tohrlo, caē phel-ba*.

Then he does the rite of *cha kra-ba pleh kra-ba* so that the dead person leaves to the living good fortune and long life. The sheep *koh* is fed (*pae ko-ba*) the foodstuff offered by the relatives of the dead person. It is made to drink a drop of grain alcohol. Then a little bit of mustard oil or ghī is rubbed on its head and they wait until it shakes itself. This movement means that the dead person has left the house leaving behind long life and good fortune. According to my informants, the *koh* is not possessed by the soul of the deceased and this word has no connection with *ko*: blood, heart. We will see later that the *koh* has a second role, that of allowing the soul to reach the land of the dead by being sacrificed to the spirits who might obstruct it. What is the main role of the *koh*? It is not possible for me to answer this question precisely as the history of *thu-dē plah* has not, up to now, been translated. I think that the *koh* is, above all, "that which is given in exchange". In order that the soul of the dead person will agree to leave *cha* and *pleh* to the living, it is necessary to make it an offering. Note in passing that almost all Gurung rites allow such an exchange. The relatives of the dead offer food to the dead. These offerings are absorbed by the *koh* who thus must itself become an offering to the dead, whilst being, at the same time, the medium of exchange since it shakes itself when the dead gives *cha* and *pleh*. The *koh* is used again as currency of exchange by being offered to the spirits so that they will not stop the soul in its progress to the land of the dead.

(10) *ō-le kaī bē-ba* (*ō-ba*: to come, to enter; *kaī*: food; *bē-ba*: to give). A cock is sacrificed to open the doors of the land of Krō where the male and female ancestors live *a-ji khe a-ji ma* (represented by two *kaī-du* on which is sprinkled the blood of a cock).

(11) *kyāh cha-ba* (*kyāh*: path; *cha-ba*: to split). The klihbrī dances around the *plah* and beats his drum to keep away the evil spirits of the road taken by the soul. The sheep, *koh*, is killed by the *moh* "to open the road" and its blood is thrown far off.

The pucu splits a plank of *timur* wood (*barcha lih-ba*).

(12) *pae le-ba* (*le-ba*: to conclude). Dances and beating of the klihbrī's drum.

- *pae sa-ba* (*sa-ba*: to close - when speaking of a wound). The klihbrī clashes his cymbals. The rest of the *rhil kahe-ba* is thrown away to the direction of the west. The *plah* is destroyed.

D. - ANALYSIS OF THE RITUALS OF THE PUCU AND KLIHBRĪ.

We have come to see that the rites performed by the pucu and the klihbrī show a great diversity. In reality, this is only apparent. Analysis of the rites will show this.

I. - Preliminary rites.

All the ceremonies start off in the same way; offerings are made to the gods and to the ancestors of the priests. In the *pae*, one also addresses offerings to the ancestors *a-ji khe a-ji ma*, a term which includes not only the direct ancestors of the deceased but also all the ancestors, all the dead. Then, after a prayer of purification, the priest introduces the different aids which he will use during the ceremony in recalling (reciting a mythical precedent) the power and use of each of these entities (e.g. *ṅahr-dõ*, the history of the drum *ṅah*).

2. - Rites of search and capture.

In the ceremonies which aim to cure a sick person, the priest goes in search of the soul which has left the body of the sick person, the absence of the soul causing the illness. The soul is the prisoner of an unlucky spirit. In the *pae*, the priest goes looking for the soul of the dead person which has been wandering since the day of death and is in the hands of evil spirits. It is the same when the pucu or klihbrī try to restore long life and fortune or to make the spirit of fortune and good luck come.

This search aims to restore or to bring back a soul or a spirit. However, it is necessary to make a distinction. When the soul of a sick person is lost, the priest does not ask the soul to return, but looks for it, catches it (*kra-ba*), brings it back and makes it reintegrate with the body to which it belongs. In this case, the action of the priest is, to a certain

extent, coercive. But when he looks for a spirit which helps man, a *kleh* (a master) or the soul of the dead person (during the *pae*), he invites it to come (*thi-ba*: although this word is not used in modern Gurung, it seems to mean "to invite"). That the soul of the dead man is invited is very important. Although the dead person has not yet rejoined the land of the dead, the land of the ancestors, he is already assimilated to the latter. One invites him. One makes food offerings to him. He has the status of a dead person and, for a Gurung, it seems that the distinction between a dead person or ancestor and a god or *kleh* (master) is not very clear.

During the search, the priest travels (e.g. *tōh kor-ba*). But this journey, accompanied by the recitation of *pe*, never corresponds to a state of trance. We will come back to this subject when talking about the literary influence, Tibetan it would seem, which has given to the priest's journey the characteristics which we see nowadays.

The search is often accompanied by a rite of offering. One makes these offerings to the soul of the dead person, or to the *kleh* who are favourable towards men, so that they will restore the soul of a sick person. These offerings are of a divers nature and vary according to whether the priest officiating is a pucu or a klihbrī. The offerings of the klihbrī are usually offerings of grain accompanied by offerings of blood. The offerings of a pucu are either offerings of grain, or offerings of grain accompanied by offerings of blood. When the pucu addresses a *kleh*, a god, a spirit who helps man, the soul of long life and fortune, he only offers grain. In contrast, if he asks the spirit Sar-phi-rini to recover the soul of a sick person which is in the hands of evil spirits, the priest offers a sacrifice of blood in exchange for the soul.

3. - Rites at the arrival of the subject of the search.

The arrival, or more exactly the return of the soul of the sick person or the soul of long life and fortune is symbolised by tying a thread (*rupa*; *ru*, thread) around the neck of the sick person in the first case, around the head of the family in the second case. In three ceremonies, the *pae* (performed by the klihbrī), *mōse ho-ba-i tēh* (performed by the pucu) and *plah -w(a)i tēh* (performed by the klihbrī), the arrival of the soul is accompanied by a special rite which aims to verify the coming of the soul. Remember that it consists in hanging a

- *pae sa-ba* (*sa-ba*: to close - when speaking of a wound). The klihbrī clashes his cymbals. The rest of the *rhil kahe-ba* is thrown away to the direction of the west. The *plah* is destroyed.

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chicken (or a cock) by one foot. When he sees the bird flapping its wings, the priest is sure that the soul is present. It is natural to find this rite done during the *pae* and *mõse ho-ba-i tẽh*. These two ceremonies are, in the eyes of the priests, the most important in respect of their reputation. We have already stressed this fact for the *pae*. The *tẽh* of *mõse ho-ba* suits a grave situation. All the previous efforts of the priest have been ineffectual. The evil spirits furiously pursue a family, the priest then decides to perform *mõse ho-ba-i tẽh*, a ceremony during which he goes to fight against all the evil spirits and will only stop when he is sure that all these spirits are at his mercy and that the souls of the sick people are recovered.

4. - Rites of Expulsion.

The evil spirits (*mõh, caẽ*, etc.) who keep the souls of the sick prisoner, who decimate the cattle, and bring bad luck (*gra*), are expelled from the village. Let us look at the stages of this expulsion. First of all, the priest "controls" the unlucky spirit. The latter is then at his mercy. In *mõse ho-ba-i tẽh*, the pucu is sure of this when the chicken hanging by its foot breaks an egg, by flapping its wings "at the touch of the spirit which is present". But in order that the evil spirit or the bad luck finally leave the house and village, it is necessary to give it "its share". A cock or chicken is sacrificed and grain offered to it. Let us recall the rite of offering grain. The priest shakes some grain nine or seven times round the head of the sick man or woman. It seems that it may be necessary to keep the local explanation of this rite: "the sick man or woman offers up his own food to the evil spirit". The rite of *li wa-ba* done by the klihbrĩ seems to confirm this interpretation: there, after having been shaken nine or seven times, the grains are put into the mouth of the sick person, and then taken out again. The person then says: "I give you my own food".

The statuette of the unlucky spirit or the wooden construction representing bad luck, covered with offerings of grain and blood, is then carried to the exit of the village. In certain cases, the sacrifice takes place here, the blood of the animals killed being scattered across the path. During this stage of expulsion, the expression "get out!" is repeated several times. The expulsion of bad luck is accompanied with a flight of four arrows with flaming heads.

5. - Types of ceremonies, (tēh).

We will briefly describe the principal rites appearing in the ceremonies of the pucu and the klihbrī, but each ceremony is not composed of all these principal rites. We have to try to distinguish the different kinds of *tēh* which vary in accordance with the rites performed. Moreover, this will allow us to note certain contradictions in the ritual. We will leave to one side the preliminary rite as it is common to all ceremonies.

a) *Ceremonies during which one makes offerings, asks for protection (*chue-ba*) and invites (*thi-ba*) :*

la chue-ba (klihbrī) [22], *chop chue-ba* (pucu/klihbrī), *tōh thi-ba* (klihbrī), *lu thi-ba* (klihbrī), *caē thi-ba* (pucu), *yō khu-ba* (pucu).

In all these ceremonies, one makes offerings and asks for protection, to the gods, to the spirits, even to the souls, but the manner of proceeding differs according to whether the pucu or the klihbrī officiates, and according to whether the character of the ceremony is marked, to a greater or lesser extent, by the influence of Tibetan Buddhism [23].

The name *la chue-ba* indicates a Tibetan influence in the religion of the klihbrī: *la* is the Tibetan word meaning "god" (*lha*). This word is never used in Gurung, its equivalent in this language being, to a certain extent, *kleh*. The pucu ritual has nothing similar to the *la chue-ba* but, like the klihbrī ritual, it includes *chop chue-ba* which also bears the mark of Tibetan influence. The two ceremonies of *chop chue-ba* differ in that the pucu does not offer a blood sacrifice. The pucu only sacrifices an animal in a rite of capture or expulsion. In contrast, the klihbrī sacrifices during *la chue-ba*, *chop chue-ba* (and also during rites of capture and expulsion).

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[22] Ceremony performed by the klihbri, etc.

[23] I propose in another work to study in detail the borrowings from Tibetan Buddhism which intersperse the prayers of the pucu and the klihbri.

The *tēh* of *tōh thi-ba* differs from the ceremonies which we have mentioned, in the sense that is shows no obvious lamaistic influence. The priest asks for the protection of *tōh-e kleh*, "the master of the woods", in order that the cattle increase. The word *chue-ba* is not used here (*cuh* or *chuh* being the offering of grain made to the gods and to the ancestors) but the word *thi-ba*, "to invite" is used. The *kleh* is invited to come to help men; one searches for it, one shows it the path and sacrifices a cock to it.

The ceremonies of *lu thi-ba* (klihbrī) and *caē thi-ba* (pucu) show complex characteristics. Both address themselves to a snake, to the *nāga* (a divinity which belongs both to Indian and to Tibetan religions). According to my informants, *lu* has the meaning of snake (cf. p. 361). The *tēh* of *lu thi-ba* is done when a person suffers from swellings (snake bites cause swellings). Many valuable offerings are made to the snake. They are enclosed, together with the statuette representing the snake, in a pot which is thrown into the water. The rite of invitation differs logically from that of expulsion, but, in fact there is no contradiction here as, from the Gurung perspective, the snake is both an animal which can harm man by biting him and the divine protectress of the land. The ceremony of the pucu which is comparable to the *lu thi-ba* is *caē thi-ba*. The priest asks the king and queen of the snakes and the father of the *caē* to make the earth fertile and to give good crops. Offerings of grain are made. The name of the ceremony is *caē thi-ba*; but a *caē* is a spirit which, in all the histories of the pucu, is unlucky and expelled by the priest. Thus there is a contradiction here.

In the type of ceremony which we are studying, I have included the *tēh* of *yō khu-ba* (pucu) during which long life and fortune, *cha* and *pleh*, are restored. This ceremony is very similar to *chop-chue-ba tēh* (pucu). There, in contrast, *cha* and *pleh* are treated in the same way as the soul of a sick or a dead person which it is necessary to capture, but this rite is not accompanied by a blood sacrifice.

b) *Ceremonies with rites of capture* (kra-ba)
and of expulsion (wa-ba).

These ceremonies are numerous and are often performed; altogether, they appear to have been little marked by the influence of Tibetan Buddhism.

Firstly, we will study those ceremonies in which the principal rites are those of the capture of a soul and the expulsion of an unlucky spirit which held the soul prisoner, then those ceremonies in which the principal rite is of expulsion.

In the first group of ceremonies, it is necessary to include all those which are performed to obtain the healing of a sick person: *mõse ho-ba* (pucu), *tuhr* (pucu), *ghaesar* (pucu), *li wa-ba* (pucu, klihbrī), *cha-gu* (pucu). Note in passing that these *tēh* are mainly done by the pucu. In the ritual the connection between the two principal rites of capture (in the term "capture", I include the search, discovery and return of the soul) and of expulsion poses an important problem.

Can one distinguish them and form them into a logical grouping? To answer this question, we will mainly use the account given of the ritual of *mõse ho-ba* which is the most complete. The search, the discovery and the return of the soul which has left the body of the sick person are indicated by three rites: the sacrifice of a chicken made to Sar-phi-rini who helps to recover the soul, the verification of the soul's arrival by the chicken or cock flapping its wings, and the action consisting of tying a thread around the neck of the sick person. The submission of the unlucky spirit to the officiating priest is made when the spirit frees the soul. By abandoning the latter it shows its powerlessness before the power of the priest. The liberation of the soul and the submission of the evil spirit are simultaneous. The rite of the broken egg in the *mõse ho-ba* allows for the verification of the submission. The phase of expulsion properly speaking begins then. The sick person offers his own food. A blood offering is made. It is necessary to note here that it is difficult to distinguish the offering of blood to Sar-phi-rini and that to the unlucky spirit because only one animal is killed and, as Sar-phi-rini is never represented by a statuette, only the *kaī-du* of the unlucky spirit receives the drops of blood. The end of the expulsion rite is marked by abandoning the statuette at the exit to the village.

To sum up, the capture and the return of the soul is clearly distinguished from the submission and expulsion of the unlucky spirit, the capture logically accompanying the submission.

The ceremony of *cha-gu* presents a certain confusion in its ritual: long life, *cha*, having left the household, a man falls sick. The return of *cha* must restore his health. But one witnesses not only the rite of capture of *cha* but also that of its expulsion, the two statuettes

representing *cha* and *pleh* having been carried to the crossroads. In this rite of expulsion, the statuette of *cha* is, to all appearances, confused with that of the unlucky spirit which has held the *cha* prisoner.

Before finishing the study of the ceremonies relating to the rite of capture, it is necessary to mention the *tēh* of *plah w(a)i* and *kimro* which are performed by the klihbrī. These two ceremonies are the only ones which contain a rite of capture not followed by a rite of expulsion. The return of the soul is made by the intervention of nine gods (?), in the first case, and of the master (*kleh*) of the crossroads in the second.

Let us now study the ceremonies characterised principally by a rite of expulsion (*wa-ba*): *tha-sō wa-ba* (klihbrī), *so-pla wa-ba* (klihbrī), *gra wa-ba* (pucu). During these three ceremonies, the priest endeavours to expel unlucky spirits or bad luck (*gra*) which trouble the peace of the household. In *tha-sō wa-ba*, the expulsion of the three *tha* (malicious spirits) is preceded by their capture and submission. My pucu informants often told me that it is the role of brahmin priests to expel the nine *gra* (nep., *graha*), the nine bad lucks each of which corresponds to a planet. In fact, brahmins come to perform the rite of expulsion of *gra* in certain Gurung houses. Nevertheless, the pucus perform the *tēh* of *gra wa-ba*, a ceremony which is a mixture of Hindu, Tibetan and Gurung beliefs.

In addition, of all the *tēh* that we have looked at, it is necessary to mention a ceremony which integrates all the types of rite of the pucu and klihbrī; that of the *pae*. The *pae* includes two main rites; a rite of capture and, above all, a rite of expulsion. (Remember that the ceremony comprises the burial, *mih wa-bae keh*, and the *pae*. But both of these rites takes a particular form in this ceremony. *Simru thi-ba* is a rite of capture consisting, as we have already said, of an invitation (*thi-ba*) as the status of the soul of the dead is in some ways different from that of the soul of a living. The rite of expulsion addresses the same subject as the rite of capture: the soul of the dead. This rite of expulsion does not take the brutal and direct form that we have described above. The priest proceeds by stages. He explains to the dead person that he can no longer live amongst the living. He tries to persuade him, then tells him to go the land of the dead from which he cannot return. Finally he goes with him as far as the gate of that country [114].

CHAPTER XVI

RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS OF THE PUCU AND THE KLIHBRĨ

A. - THE WORLD AND THE GODS.

I. - The creation.

Two myths of the pucu (*apa kahrab kleh* and *lem-ku*) describe the creation of the world. The earth was created by Cha-li-paima and the sky by Mu-li-paima (*ćha-li-paima*: father and mother of the earth (?); *mu-li-paima*: father and mother of the sky (?). The verb used for "create" is *ke-ba* which means "to draw out of nothing". In Gurung, there is another verb, *cu-ba*, which also means "to create", but in the sense of "to accomplish and achieve the creation". I think that it is necessary to see the difference between these two words "to create" and "to make, to fabricate".[1]

Having been created, the earth and the sky were "stabilised", placed, fixed. The verb used to express this idea is *chyo-ba* which nowadays means "to stop an object or person rolling down a slope". It was Tihrjyõ (or Tuhrjyõ) which placed and established the earth, Kohrlomerlo who placed and established the sky. The east was put in place by Bhadra-khae-ba, the south by Mahiri-khae-ba (or Mahi-khae-ba), the west by Rhalbu-khae-ba, the north by Kumjo-khae-ba (or Kinjo-khae-ba), and Wainabarnaje, the centre of the world, by Cyaki-luh-bai-phaile-guru-rhimarche. Then, the earth was "stitched" (*tuhn-ba*) with creeping plants (*du-ba*) and the sky with clouds. The account of the creation finally indicates where man and the principal animals were created. Man

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[1] See with regard to the distinction made by EVANS -PRITCHARD between "*cak* (*chak*) creation *ex nihilo* and in thought or imagination (and) *tath* (*thath*): to make something out of something else materially existing" (*Nuer Religion*, p. 5).

was created at Kẽhne-kyã-po-khaga-sũi-hyule (*kyã-po*, crossroads (?); *khaga* or *kharga*, the name of a place which could be compared with Kah-rag, the name given in an ancient Tibetan myth to the land of the demons which existed before the coming of the first king of Tibet, Pu-gyel [2]; *sũ* or *sõ*, place; *i*, genitive particle; *hyula*, country). In the same place A-pa-kahrab-kleh was created (*a-pa*: father; *kahrab* or *kahrabraĩ*: cf. above; *kleh*: master).

In the *pe* of *sirlo tohrlo*, the klihbrĩ gives another version of the creation of the world. Unfortunately, it is not possible to give an exact account since it is told in an ancient Gurung language which is almost unintelligible. However, it is interesting to note the summary given by my main klihbrĩ informant: "Kleh-karuri created the sky, the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars. He had a son who lived halfway between the sky and the earth. One day, Kleh-karuri abandoned his son. He descended the nine bamboo poles, the nine ladders, going beyond the nine doors which separated his son from the earth. He left with the latter only a guardian, Thurelode, who had broken his legs. Then he left to level the earth".

These two stories express common belief: the sky and earth are joined by a pole placed in the centre of the world. For the pucu, Wainabarnaje occupies the centre of the world. He is the pole holding up the celestial vault. In the history of *sirlo tohrlo*, we also see this link appear between the earth and sky. The son of Kleh-karuri was between earth and sky. The father descended the nine steps, the nine ladders which separate his son from the earth. In the klihbrĩ's history the myth is more obvious than in that of the pucu, but the beliefs expressed, nowadays, by the pucus shows the similarity between the two myths in relation to the pole uniting the sky and the earth. Moreover, the pucu's version that has been given must have been altered under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism during the course of the centuries. Guru-rhimarche is not a Gurung name [115]. It is probably a form of Guru Rin-po-che (a Tibetan Buddhist god). The same remark could be made on the subject of Bhadra. Moreover, we will see that the four gods of the cardinal points cited by the pucus have also been borrowed, not without alteration, from Tibetan Buddhism [116].

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[2] SNELLGROVE, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

In contrast, the klihbrī's version does not show such borrowings and tells, so it seems, of more ancient beliefs, beliefs which are found in pre-Buddhist Tibetan myths. In the *pe* of *sirlo tohrlo*, it is told that Kleh-karuri descended from the sky to the earth in order to level it. Let us remember here that, in a Gurung legend that we have already cited (cf. p. 197), the first Gurung king was called Karu-kleh. Despite the inversion (common in Gurung, it does not change the sense), it seems that Kleh-karuri and Karu-kleh (and perhaps Karabrai-kleh) could be the same person, the first god-king. But, according to pre-Buddhist Tibetan beliefs, it is said that the first king of Tibet (*gña-khri-btsan-po*) descended from the sky by way of a rope[3] (Mu rope; *mu*, sky, gur.). I am inclined to think that there is a close connection between the myth of the Gurung klihbrī and the pre-Buddhist Tibetan myth, which would hardly be surprising since, according to tradition, the Gurungs came from the north.

The divinities who participated at the creation are called either *la* or *kleh*. We have already indicated that *la* is the Tibetan word meaning god (*lha*). In contrast, the word *kleh* is Gurung and means master, lord, or owner. If we consider together the names of the divinities of the pucu and klihbrī pantheon, it appears that those which have been borrowed from Tibetan Buddhism are followed by the word *la*, whereas the names of divinities we consider as belonging to ancient Gurung beliefs are followed by the word *kleh*. Thus *Guru-rhimarche-la* as opposed to *Toh-kleh*, the master of the woods. It is not our main purpose to study the history of the pucu and klihbrī religions, but several observations have already been made to show the connections which exist between Gurung and Tibetan religious beliefs. Thus Hinduism has, so to speak, nothing in common with the religion of the pucu and that of the klihbrī. Buddhist beliefs, mainly pre-Buddhism from Tibet, seem to have influenced, to a large extent, the two Gurung religions.

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[3] R. STEIN, "Leao-Tche" (*T'oung-Pao*, 35, 1940, pp. 1-154), p. 68, n. I; SNELLGROVE, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

2. - The World.

The pucu and the klihbrī conceive of the world in the same way. However, it is necessary to remark that, on this point, the *pe* are not very precise and the explanations of informants are often contradictory. The earth is flat and round. The four geographic directions are governed by one divinity. At the centre, the pillar of the world is erected, represented by Wainabarnaje who supports the celestial vault and unites the earth and the sky. This order is completed by a second which divides the supernatural world vertically.

Moon	or	Moon and Sun
Sun		Sky
Sky		Earth
Earth		*Si* and *Krõ*
Krõ		
Si		

Underneath the earth (*sa*) are found *Krõ* and *Si* which are, according to my informants, on two different levels. *Si* is apparently the land of the dead (*si-ba*: to die). Even though *Krõ* is very often cited (with *Cõ*) in the *pe* of the pucus, its position and significance is not clearly apparent because of numerous contradictory accounts. Most of the events described in the *pe* happen in *Krõ-e nasa* (the village of *Krõ*) or at *Cõ-e nasa* (the village of *Cõ*). *Krõ* and *Cõ* are separated by a door, a door which the soul of a man must get through to penetrate into the world of the souls of the dead. *Krõ* appears as a sort of "lost paradise", where the first pucus lived, where their instruments were created, but where evil spirits did not exist. At *Cõ*, on the contrary, the latter were born and troubled the peace of mankind. The people of *Cõ* appealed to the pucus of *Krõ* for help to come and assist them and rid them of unlucky spirits. According to my informants, *Cõ* was a village situated on the earth, where spirits troubled the peace of mankind. But the pucus of *Krõ*, who possess "perfect knowledge", came there "to control" those unlucky spirits. To sum up, *Krõ* is the land where the ancestors lived sheltered from unhappiness. *Krõ* is separated from the world of the living by a door (and by other barriers which we will study later). It is necessary to descend to reach there (cf. *syomai sa-thi-ba*). What is the

difference between *Krõ* and *Si*? Both are situated underneath the earth. The souls of the dead do not live at *Krõ*, but they go through it to get to a Lilliputian country where they stay. No *pe* confirms that this country and *Si* are the same, but one can assume it, if one accepts that *Si* is the land of the dead. Nothing has led us to think that there are two worlds of the dead, like hell and heaven [117]. Disparate elements belonging to diverse religions must have been added to the primitive beliefs of the pucus, without having any logical foundation. The confusion which exists about the character and importance of Wainabarnaje and Guru-rhimarche is evident proof of this. Wainabarnaje, the pillar of the world, probably expresses a belief which predates that of Guru-rhimarche, brought from Tibetan Buddhism. When the pucus have undergone this Buddhist influence, the two divinities are found in competition without either having a precise role. The myth of the creation indicates that Guru-rhimarche installed Wainabarnaje, but other *pe* tend to contradict this. [118]

Above the earth is the sky (*mu*), the sun and the moon [4]. The sky includes all the atmosphere which is found above man. Man's breath, *so*, is lost in the sky at his death. The sun and moon are independent, but informants are not unanimous in saying that both are above the sky. The *pe* are not precise on this point.

3. - The Gods.

The principal gods (*la*) of the pucu pantheon are ten in number. They are often enumerated together at the beginning of a *pe*.

Tuhrjyõ[5] (or *Tihrjyõ*: master of the cemetery (cf. pp. 353, 389).
Hoigar
Kimjyõ
Keda
Khorlo-merlo: god of the sky (?) (tib., *'khor-lo*, cakra)
Śyar-tohrje-samba [Sya-tohrje-satba]: god of the east

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[4] We have already indicated that the pucus and klihbris say that *la* means "sun" and *ñih* "moon", whereas in Tibetan, *ñi* means "sun" and *zla* "moon".

[5] One can say either *Tuhrjyõ-kleh* or *Tuhrjyõ-la*

Lo-rhini-cyoni [Lõ-rhinje c-hhondu]: god of the south
Nuh-nawa-thajyõ-tuhba: god of the west
Cyõ-thajyõ-tuhba: god of the north
Wainabarnaje [Wuin Nõba K-hhyala]: centre of the world, or *Guru-rhimarche*[6].

Nothing confirms the supremacy of one of these gods over the other. However, Wainabarnaje, according to certain informants, and Guru-rhimarche according to others, play a predominant role.

How are the gods distinguished from the other spirits in the ritual of the pucu? At the start of all the religious ceremonies, the priest honours the ten principal gods by offering them rice grains (usually fried) which he throws in front of him, and asks for their help and protection.

On the occasion of several *tẽh*, such as *yõ khu-ba*, the pucu models ten cones of rice paste which he puts in a line beside him. These cones symbolise the ten gods. That of Wainabarnaje (or Guru-rhimarche) is larger than the others (cf. Pl. XXIII:45). These cones (*kaĩ-du*) are reminiscent of the ones which Buddhist lamas offer to the gods.The klihbrĩ also models *kaĩ-du*, but my informants were unable to tell me the names of the gods to which they were offered.

These gods have no specific form and only Wainabarnaje and the four gods of the cardinal points occupy a definite place in the cosmos. Although the other divinities and spirits have precise representations and roles, it is not the same for the principal gods. Their immediate presence is not felt by Gurung laymen, who do not know their names and do not pray to them. In contrast, they often talk of divinities such as Sildo-naldo and the "Lord of the forests" because they have a specific place in their life by making the earth fertile and increasing the herds.

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[6] Certain of the preceding names can be compared with Tibetan names: *tchrje samba* with *Rdo-rǰe sems-dpa'* (pron. *dorje semba*), *rhini cyoni* with *Rin-chen 'byuṅ-gnas* (pron. *rin-chen-chuṅ-ba*), *guru-rimarche* with *Guru rin-po-čhe* (cf. pp. 334, 390)

B. - THE SPIRITS.

Although the principal gods only participate in a very vague and distant manner in the life of men, whilst assuring "the equilibrium" of the world, a large number of spirits live close to human beings and are in continual contact with them, some troubling their peace and others coming to help them recover.

There are three kinds of spirits: spirits not born of man which harm him, spirits not born of man which help him, and spirits born of man which all harm him. There are numerous unlucky spirits not born of man. In the *pe* of the pucus, they talk of the *caẽ*, the *tha* and the *rhĩ*. "The pucus struggle against the *caẽ*, the klihbrĩ against the *tha*, and the lamas against the *tha* and the *rhĩ*". I could get no precise information to differentiate all these unlucky spirits, nor to fix their number. The klihbrĩs talked of *tha-sõ*, (the three *tha*), the lama and pucu of *tha-ku*, (the nine *tha*). One also finds the expression *rhĩ-ku*, *caẽ-ku* (the nine *rhĩ* and the nine *caẽ*), but we will see later that a lot of names are followed by the number "nine", without it corresponding to any reality.

Let us look at the word *pum* [7] or *pum-śyo* (witch). The information that I have gathered on this subject is very imprecise. They are not human beings, even though they may assume a human form. The Gurungs say that in such or such a village, there was at one time or there is a *pum-śyo*. "Will o' the wisps", which are sometimes visible at night, are caused by fire spouting out from the nails of the witches. In the *pe* of the pucu, the seven *pum* are mentioned without further detail, except in *chopa* which tells how Kayo-rhini (*kayo*: right) had two children, Pumi-soploikhe-soplaime who was born from its right nostril and Pumi-prahwetewai who was born from its left nostril and began to harm men like the spirit Daure. It seems that the *pum* must be classified with the *tha*, *caẽ* and *rhĩ*. [APPENDIX F]

The pucu believes in two spirits which, in certain conditions, help men to neutralise the evil action of bad spirits. One of them is Puhdũ-kahrdam, whose myth has perhaps been influenced by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

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[7] Von Furer-Haimendorf indicates that the Sherpas believe in *pem* or witches ("Prebuddhist Elements in Sherpa Belief and Ritual", *Man*, no. 61, p. 50).

Lar-phi-rhini (*la*, sun?; *rhini* indicates the female sex), impregnated by the sun, gave birth one day to a greedy giant, Puhdũ-kahrdam whose voracity ruined the country. Guru-rimarche, the uncle or maternal great-uncle of Lar-phi-rhini, immobilised the giant by a trick and made him promise to be useful to men and to reduce his appetite to reasonable limits. Puhdũ-kahrdam has the power to bring men material comfort, wealth, but, strictly speaking, he has no influence over a person. If the soul is in danger, the son of Lar-phi-rhini is powerless. This spirit is honoured like a god, with offerings of rice and grain alcohol, but he is not placed on the same level as the ten principal gods; *chop chue-ba tẽh* is the only ceremony dedicated to him.

In contrast, Sar-phi-rhini helps to fight against evil spirits which attack a man's soul. Note in passing the similarity between the two female names, Lar-phi-rhini and Sar-phi-rhini, one being linked to the sun (?), to material wealth, and the other to the earth and to the well-being of the human soul. The origin of the character of Sar-phi-rhini is not known. Nothing is known about her birth. One only knows that she is the wife of Waj-krõh (*krõh*: headman of the village in modern Gurung). One day her husband noticed that she ate the "taste" from the food and drink. By a trick, he succeeded in pushing her into a stream, but Sar-phi-rhini did not die and began to sow sickness among men. Tõh-grẽ-pucu, an ancestor of the pucus, met her and made an agreement with her: "Sar-phi-rhini will help to regain imprisoned souls from the unlucky spirits (spirits of the dead), on condition that a chicken's blood is offered to her in exchange for the soul." Sar-phi-rhini is not the spirit of a dead person (nothing indicates that she was born of man, or died), but lives in the world of the wandering spirits of the dead who harm the human soul. She is "*mõhe kleh*" (*mõh*: spirit of the dead; *kleh*: master), mistress of the wandering spirits of the dead. Sometimes, in conversation, one uses the word *pum śyo* (witch) to indicate Sar-phi-rhini.

I have made a distinction between the ten principal gods and the two spirits, Sar-phi-rhini and the son of Lar-phi-rhini because the pucus make one, but all these supernatural beings have a common trait, they are concerned from near or afar in the happiness of men. If one knows how to pray or to make offerings to them, one can gain their protection and help. With the *caẽ*, *tha*, *rhĩ* and *mõh*, it is quite different. They spend their time doing harm to human beings and only the pucus, with

the help of the divinities previously studied, are able to oppose their action.

The *mõh* have a predominant place in the myths of the pucus and are the supernatural beings most understood by the pucus and the ordinary Gurungs. In the evenings especially, the villagers feel themselves to be surrounded by the *mõh*, as the darkness is favourable to their activity. The remote parts of the village, the woods and the cemeteries, are the places which they like to frequent. Although a Gurung is only vaguely aware of the existence of the principal gods, he knows in detail everything connected to the life of the *mõh* and of the dangers which they can cause. The *pe* of the pucus give numerous accounts of the life of the *mõh*. The following is a list of the main spirits which are called *mõh*:

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by the mountain. For example: Rĩ-ce who fell accidentally from the mountain. Myõ-ce who killed himself by deliberately falling off a mountain. Rĩ-ce and Myõ-ce (brother and sister) lived in a state of incest.

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by a landslide. For example: Umerhõ is cursed by his wife because he always lives with his flocks and refuses to go back to her.

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by water. For example: a man drowned after having been cheated.

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by fire.

- the *mõh* of a human being killed by wood. For example: Pa-che-rhõ hanged himself from a tree to be reunited with his daughter who is changed into a bird living in a tree. The mother of Põh-bai-rhõ died in a hole in a hollow tree after having cheated someone.

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by a leopard (or tiger?). For example: Thul-phe-rhini was devoured by a leopard when she tried to hunt to feed her fatherless sons.

- the *mõh* of a human being "eaten" by a bear.

- the *mõh* of a human being killed by poison. For example: Thul-phe-rhõ drank poison accidentally and died.

- the *mõh* of a human being stabbed by a knife. For example: Lem-ta is killed by a man whom he had cheated.

- the *mõh* of a woman who died in childbirth.

- the *mõh* who comes from a family of *ṅe* kin.

- Daure who was transformed into a *mõh* by his father A-pa-kahrab-kleh whom he had tried to kill.

- Ghaesar-phi, who seems to be the son or daughter of A-pa-kahrab-kleh, killed by a spell cast by the father's second wife.

From this list, one can conclude that a *mõh* is the spirit of a man who died in accidental or exceptional circumstances. In general, the human dies, either by the action of one of the five elements, earth, water, fire, wood or iron, or is devoured by wild animals. The human being who becomes a *mõh* can be either male or female.

It is also interesting to look at the circumstances which preceded the death: a brother and a sister live in a state of incest, a man prefers his flocks to his wife, one man cheats another, or a man tries to kill his father. A violent or accidental death is preceded by acts condemned by society because they are contrary to its laws and traditions.

However, it is not always like this. It can happen that death is not preceded by a socially reprehensible act. Nevertheless, circumstances preceding death are usually extraordinary: a widow hunts (a woman never hunts) to feed her starving children, a father wishes to be reunited with his daughter who has been changed into a bird because she can no longer live with her stepmother who hated her and maltreated her. The chain of events can thus be presented in the following general form:

- extraordinary circumstances followed by a violent death, leading to the appearance of a new *mõh*.

The number of *mōh* is incalculable and is not fixed. The popular belief has it that new ones are created every day. The *mōh* live invisibly amongst men, but do not possess them. However, we have indicated when looking at the ceremony which aims to remove a woman's sterility, that the ritual could lead one to think that it is one of possession. The case is exceptional, and nothing here suggests that it has anything to do with a *mōh*. In the mind of the Gurung, the *mōh*, even though invisible, has all the characteristics of a human being: it eats and it speaks. A *mōh* does not disappear. Only its activity, which is always unlucky, can be counteracted. This activity is specialised. There is the *mōh* "eater" of men, the *mōh* "eater" of wealth, the *mōh* "eater" of goats and sheep, and the *mōh* "eater" of horses, etc.

When one asks a Gurung why a *mōh* always acts against the interests of living beings, he often replies: "It is natural that it should be like this, as a *mōh* is a wandering soul of a dead person who cannot go to the land of the souls of the dead because he died in peculiar circumstances." A violent death is, without any doubt, considered as a misfortune, as a bad sign and an exceptional situation. We have also stressed the fact that, in the *pe*, many deaths are preceded by socially reprehensible or extraordinary acts. The circumstances which precede and accompany such a death are considered unhappy. A wandering soul is an unhappy soul. In the *pe* of *Lemku*, the sad situation of a wandering soul which can never get as far as the land of the dead is described. Some assert that in the night they hear the lamentations of these souls and add: "Certain wandering souls are trying to attract living souls towards them as they are unhappy, alone, and abandoned. As for the others, because they have been the sort of people who have brought misfortune, they continue to do harm to men after death."

If we look at the various characteristics of the *mōh* together, it is tempting to ask if the *mōh* is not the soul of a dead person whose *pae* has not been celebrated. I do not think that this definition expresses the Gurung conception of the *mōh*. In the *pe* of *Lemku*, it tells of a soul whose *pae* has not been celebrated, but it does not compare it to a *mōh*. On the contrary, it seems that the *mōh* may be the soul of a dead person who, in consequence of the circumstances which accompanied death, cannot enter the land of the dead and stays to wander amongst the living.

C. - THE SOUL.

Let us briefly recall that the soul is called *plah* and that a man has nine souls (*plah-ku*). If one of these leaves the body of a man, he falls ill. If the nine souls separate themselves from the body, the man dies [8]. Man is born with one soul. The soul gives life and feeling to the body. When one of the nine souls of a man is lost and then found, it causes the wings of a chicken to beat which is taken as proof of the return of the soul. It is invisible and moves about in the human body and in the air, but it does not appear to be confused with the breath, *so*. In fact they do use the word *so-plah* (the soul of the breath).

A man does not die if one of his nine souls temporarily leaves him. When a person dreams when he is sleeping, the images which form in his dream reproduce that which one of the nine souls sees when it has left the body during sleep. Together the body and the soul are strong, but if they partially separate, both are weakened. In fact, a wandering soul is at the mercy of harmful spirits which could take it prisoner far from the body. A prolonged absence of one of the nine souls brings weakness, illness. The soul can have an independent existence from that of the body, but its situation then becomes precarious and puts the body in danger. Its mobility is harmful to the body. The soul is essential to give it life, but on the other hand, it is in the body that the soul finds the most security. It is its milieu. Outside it, its power is limited. Without the help of the pucu or the klihbrī, it is powerless. If it has fallen into the hands of a *mōh*, only the intervention of the priest can allow it to return to the body where it is supposed to live. After the death of a man, the soul alone cannot find the path towards the country of the souls. The priest must indicate what it must do in order to reach that country. Only the pucu, the klihbrī, and the lama communicate with the soul when it is wandering (*kya-ba*) and is in the hands of the *mōh*; the pucu must "control" (*syo-ba*) these spirits, make them do what he says, and compel them to give up the wandering soul of the sick man. This can be done by the intervention of Sar-phi-rhini and takes the form of an exchange

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[8] In the text which follows, when we use the word "soul", we mean the nine souls living in a human being, except when we specify that one of the nine souls is affected.

(*thudē plah* : soul exchange?). Sar-phi-rhini takes the soul from the *mōh*, and the pucu offers her the blood of a chicken in exchange for the soul.

What becomes of a man after death? Here, it is necessary to distinguish between the information given by the *pe* of the pucus and klihbrīs and that given by the priests themselves. The ritual of the funerals shows us the soul after death wandering about the house and the village where it had lived in the body of the deceased. The priest explains to the dead person his new state, to let him know that he is no longer one of the living, but the dead person does not decide to leave his own people. Thus the soul does not go away. But this situation can only be temporary. The soul cannot continue to wander amongst the living because it is in danger of becoming a *mōh* itself, a harmful spirit. It is up to the priest to finally remove it from the land of the living and to lead it to the country where the souls of the ancestors live. Between death and the moment when the priest begins the ceremony of the end of mourning (*pae*), the soul falls into the hands of harmful spirits. As a result, the priest must first of all strive to retrieve the soul, and to liberate it. In the phase which follows, the priest invites the dead person - that is to say, the soul - to leave the world of the living, taking nothing away which has belonged to him, and to forget them. On the route leading to the land of the dead is a pond. There, the soul drinks and immediately forgets its existence among men.

To sum up, the soul shows reluctance to leave the living to whom it is attached, but it cannot live happily amongst them because its place is there where the souls of its ancestors live. It finds itself, in some way, subject to a false equilibrium.

The new world where the soul goes to live is different to that of the living, not only in regard to the beings that it meets there - the dead - but also in regard to its aspect. It is a Lilliputian world. Time is foreshortened : that which one sows in the evening is ripe the following day. Bees make their hive in a turnip, the oxen are attached to one grass. One can rest one's head on goat excrement and sleep lying on one ear, the other covering the body.

Two important traits seem to characterise this country where the ancestors live. They live there without dying and are shielded from attack by harmful spirits. To a certain extent it resembles a "lost paradise", the country of *Krō* where the first men lived, the first ancestors of the pucus.

Moreover, it is necessary to note that the door of *Krõ* separates the world of the living from that of the dead.

After death, all the souls go to live in the same country. Nothing points to there being any distinction made between souls. They are not judged by virtue of the life that they have lead while they lived in a human body. Every soul can enter the land of the dead if the pucu succeeds in leading it there. Nevertheless, as we have seen previously, it can happen that some souls do not manage, for various reasons, to reach the land of the dead and become *mõh*. It is not possible to say that the reason for this is that each of these spirits necessarily represents the soul of a person who has lived a bad life.

All these beliefs about the soul differ in varying degrees among the Gurungs. However, probably under the influence of Tibetan Buddhism, some Gurungs have beliefs which tend to complicate those already described. It is not unusual to hear a Gurung talk about the transmigration of souls. After death, the soul goes into another body, animal or vegetable. What is one to think of such a belief and to what degree has it taken root in the mind of Gurungs?

The religion of the pucus [9] as it appears in the *pe* and the physical ritual lacks the idea of the transmigration of the soul. However the pucus who have been my informants believe, to a certain extent, in this idea. The *pae* must, theoretically, take place within the forty-nine days following death (the duration found in the "Book of the Dead" of Tibetan Buddhism). If this delay is respected, the soul can reach the land of the dead. If not, so say my informants, the soul starts a cycle of transmigrations which must end by a return of the soul to a human body. Others say that one cycle consists of 84 transmigrations and that which precedes the return to human form occurs in the form of a dog. I remarked to my informants that nearly all the *pae* were celebrated well after the 49 days and that surprised me. Several pucus replied (it was evident that this was the first time they had envisaged such a problem) that one celebrated the *pae* all the same, but that it had no effect as the soul had already started to transmigrate.[119]

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[9] In one of the *pe* of the pucus (*pundul-pucu*), I have found a short reference to the idea of transmigration. The phrase was not in Gurung, but in Nepali. Moreover, it had no relation to the context and without doubt represented a recent addition.

This Buddhist belief is only very superficial and imprecise among the Gurungs, and does not seem to influence their behaviour. We have given such an example with regard to the *pae*. Moreover, the attitude of the Gurungs towards animals and plants does not reveal any evidence of this belief. Even in the settlements where several " village lamas" live, the Gurungs are hardly conscious of it. It is therefore possible to think that the beliefs concerning the soul which are contained in the *pe* of the pucus and klihbrīs, really represent those of the large majority of Gurungs.

D. - OLD AGE AND GOOD LUCK.

Old age and good luck are represented by two birds: *cha-name* and *pleh-name* (*cha* : age; *pleh* : fortune; *name* : bird). By *cha* Gurungs evidently mean "long life". If *cha-name* lives in a house, the people who live there die at an advanced age. In contrast, if it is absent, there is a risk of death coming prematurely. In the same way, *pleh* attracts wealth and plenty to a family. Its absence means poverty. We have, several times used the expressions "soul of old age" and "soul of good luck". While it is not necessary to confuse these two sorts of spirits with those which live in the body of a human being, it seems right to use the same word "soul" because, in all respects, *cha* and *pleh* have traits in common with *plah*, the soul of a man.

Every man has a *plah* (or more exactly nine *plah*), but he has not a *cha* or a *pleh*. Each house is inhabited by a *cha* and a *pleh*. When a family (father, mother and children) build a house, they put inside it two statuettes of rice paste representing the birds, *cha-name* and *pleh-name*. But these birds can leave the house. The family must then call a priest in to bring them back if it is not to be struck by death and poverty.

The *pe* of *cha-name* and *pleh-name* tells how a man and his wife met the two birds one day. They took them home and fed them. The excrement of the birds were of gold and silver. The two birds are the source of good luck. Nevertheless, it only comes if one goes to find it. The *pe* of *dagdawa* tells how two poor old men were thirsty. They were refused water from the spring in their village. They looked for a long time for water and, after a lot of effort, succeeded in finding a spring, by digging in some marshy land. This water was delicious, "nourishing

water, water fit for kings", and it was the origin of their fortune. But when they had left the spring, they said: "Hide the position of this spring, that those who find it drink, and those who do not find it remain thirsty." In other words, *cha-name* and *pleh-name* live in a house if they are fed, if one works to merit their presence. The place held by these two birds in Gurung belief is considerable. Certain pucus believe that they represent Wainabarnaje in the house (*kul deotā* : the god of the house, in Nepali). In the *pe* of *phū-dā*, Wainabarnaje is linked to old age and good luck. Certain informants have assured me that *cha-name* and *pleh-name* were the two principal divinities. In the *pe* of *cahmarśīdhū*, it is specified that the two birds are not of a common type; they have a little beak and brilliant plumage. But no reference is made with regard to the reason why old age and good luck are represented by two birds. We will return to this point in another section (cf. p. 411).

cha-name and *pleh-name* leave a home without the intervention of evil spirits who have no contact with them. The long ceremony of the pucu called *yõ khu-ba tēh* (*yõ* : riches; *khu-ba* : to gather, to collect) aims to call back the two birds. No blood sacrifice is done. The audience cry: "*khoe!*" ("Come!") to call *cha* and *pleh*. A thread is then tied round the neck of the master of the house, symbolising their return. The same rite is observed when the soul is brought back into the body of a sick person.

It is at the death of a member of the family that *cha* and *pleh* are at most risk of leaving the house. During the *pae*, the pucu and the klihbrī remind the dead person that he must leave long life and fortune to the living and take away the short life. But so that the dead person agrees to leave them to the living, it is necessary to celebrate the *pae*, during which one gives him "his part" in the form of offerings. The *pe* of *cahmarśīdhū* tells how a son having refused to celebrate his father's funerals, the latter took away *cha* and *pleh*. Sickness and poverty struck the son who had to go back to the pucu in order to celebrate his father's *pae*. In consequence, the two birds came back to live in his house.

E. - BLOOD SACRIFICE.

Animal sacrifice (*khro*) is one of the essential elements of ritual. Only the Buddhist ceremonies do not have it, but Gurung beliefs are not

much affected by this. Thus, during the *pae*, the lama and the pucu are invited to officiate at the same time. The lama does not make sacrifice, but the pucu, who is a few metres from him in an adjoining place, makes sacrifice several times.

All the ceremonies of the pucus and the klihbrĩs which aim to struggle against evil supernatural beings contain a sacrifice. The word "sacrifice" is used here in the restricted sense of an offering of blood as opposed to an offering of grain. The animals killed are, according to the occasion, a chicken, a cock, a goat or a sheep. The sex of the animals sacrificed is decided, either according to the sex of the person for whom the ritual is celebrated (for example, the sheep-*koh* sacrificed during the *pae* by the klihbrĩ), or according to the sex of the spirit for whom the sacrifice is meant (for example, the hen sacrificed to Sar-phi-rhini).

The sacrifice of a sheep or goat, is much more expensive than that of a chicken, and is reserved for ceremonies whose outcome is considered important (for example, to enable the soul of the dead person to go to the land of the dead). It seems that the sacrifice of the goat (and of the sheep) was a lot more frequent in the past than nowadays. In most of the religious ceremonies related in the *pe*, a goat or a sheep and a chicken are sacrificed simultaneously. The disappearance of numerous flocks during the last hundred years could be the origin of this change. The sacrifice is done in three situations: when the soul of a living person is in the hands of spirits, when the soul of a dead person is imprisoned by the same, and when a soul going towards the land of the dead must struggle against supernatural beings. The pucu offers no sacrifice to the ten principal gods. The offerings of grain and alcohol are reserved for them. A sacrifice is only made when the soul of a living or dead person is at grips with harmful spirits. It is not the expression of worship to a god.

Sacrifice allows the action of harmful supernatural beings against the soul of a living or dead person, to be counteracted. It is not always done in favour of the spirit who is acting against the soul. We have already indicated that Sar-phi-rhini, mistress of the *mõh*, is charged with finding the lost soul and bringing it back to the pucu, and that is by virtue of an agreement between her and the priest. On this point, the *pe* leaves us in no doubt. Sar-phi-rhini and the pucu have made an agreement following which Sar-phi-rhini promises to retrieve the lost soul if a chicken is sacrificed to her (*khro bẽ-ba*: to give a blood sacrifice).

In the case of sacrifices to Daure, Ghaesar-phi and to the harmful spirits who stop the progress of the soul towards the land of the dead, the *pe* are less explicit. However, it seems that there is the same idea of contract prevailing here: a sacrifice is offered in order that the soul be freed. The idea of sacrifice is linked to that of exchange.

In fact what does one give when one sacrifices? It is not the animal's soul, as nothing leads us to think that an animal has a soul. It is its life and by this I think that the Gurungs understand its blood, (*ko*) and its breath (*so*). The blood is sprinkled on the paste statuette representing the spirit, or on the grain offerings. On this occasion, it is never eaten by the living as it is the food of the spirits. In contrast, the blood of an animal which is not killed for religious purposes is eaten when coagulated. The blood of a sheep killed during the *pae* is thrown far away. The meat of the animal seems also to be part of the offering, but the ideas of the Gurungs are confused at this point. Nevertheless, the flesh of the sacrificed animal is eaten in the days following the ceremony. It also happens that when a chicken is sacrificed at the crossroads according to the horoscope determining the ceremony, its blood is sprinkled along a line cut perpendicularly in the pathway. The blood is given to the evil spirit to drink, there where it must stay, outside the village from which it is expelled. The blood thus poured becomes a sort of barrier across the pathway, preventing the spirit from penetrating the place where men live.

Only the sacrifice is necessary for retrieving the soul and counteracting the harmful actions of the spirits. During *li wa-ba, dopate ca-ba*, which are shortened ceremonies, the *pe* are not usually recited, but the sacrifice always takes place. From this point of view, the *pe* of *krõlu-pucu* is particularly interesting. It tells how, by the harmful action of spirits, sickness had struck the village of Cõ, killing men and beasts. When Krõlu-pucu agreed to deliver the village from evil spirits, there were no more goats to sacrifice. The spirits would not be satisfied with a sacrifice of lesser value. The pucu demanded that they find an orphan in the country. They brought him a child without father or mother "who had a huge wobbling head, and whose mouth was blocked by its tongue", in other words a being who was abnormal, but was nevertheless a human being. He took it away into the mountain, and there transformed it, organ by organ, into a goat which was sacrificed. This story clearly shows the repugnance of the ancient pucus at the sacrifice of a human

being, but more importantly it shows that the goat is considered as a substitute for man. In the *pe* of *krõlu-pucu*, the orphan child, who is physically abnormal, is not sacrificed in the form of a man. The pucu priest changes it into a goat and it is this goat substituted for a man which is offered as a blood sacrifice.

As Evans-Pritchard has shown [10], such a rite of substitution implies the equation: man = animal sacrificed. Nowadays, the Gurung beliefs and ritual do not make this equation very clear. This could be explained by the fact that when abandoning the pastoral way of life based on the rearing of sheep and goats for an agricultural way of life based mainly on cultivation, the Gurungs have forgotten the beliefs which they had when they were shepherds. However, I have remarked that a Gurung laments more at the loss of a goat (or a head of cattle) than the destruction of a field of cereals.

A passage in the *pe* of *a-pa kahrab kleh* (pucu) seems to indicate the mythical value which the Gurung shepherds gave to the goat in their beliefs. After the creation, it is told, A-pa-kahrab-kleh left to search for a place to sleep, a shelter to live in. The horse came, trotting, but could not carry him. It was the same with the deer, the yak, etc. The he-goat came. "I am looking for a place to sleep, a shelter to live in. Carry me on your back. I will make you beautiful spiral horns", A-pa-kahrab-kleh said to him. The he-goat having agreed, A-pa-kahrab-kleh left, carried by the animal. Lastly, let us recall that the ritual role of the goat is specified in the *pe* of *ṅahrdõ* which explains that if the *ṅah* (drum) is not covered with goat skin and its fabrication is not accompanied with the sacrifice of a goat, this drum has not got any *so* (breath), of life.

F. - MORAL ASPECT.

I have not met, either in the *pe* of the pucus, or in everyday conversation, a Gurung word which could have the same meaning as "sin". Occasionally, a man passes judgement such as "*a-chyã-ba mu*" (*a-chyã-ba* : ugly, bad; *mu* : final particle), "it is ugly, it is bad". In fact

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[10] EVANS-PRITCHARD, *Nuer Religion*, pp. 248 sq.

this judgement always has aesthetic over-tones. One also uses "*a-ta*", "that's not any good, it's bad". But in no case does such a judgement imply the idea of transgression of a divine law. The traditional prayers for the dead pronounced by the pucus and the klihbrīs do not mention the existence of a supernatural judgement. An action judged as bad does not have any consequences in the after-life. We have said that, in the *pe*, it tells how some people having committed grave faults in their lifetime have become spirits (*mõh*) after their death, but a man who has committed a grave fault does not always become a *mõh*. Moreover, conversations which I have had do not allow one to presume it. At most we can say that there exists, in the Gurung mind, a confused impression that he who has lived under an unlucky sign can, after his death, continue to wander unhappily amongst men. [APPENDIX G]

This way of thinking must be reconciled with the tendency of the Gurungs to forget quickly a personal fault or a social misdemeanour [11] if the person who has done it recognises, and is sorry for his fault, or accepts the punishment and does not do it again. The shortcoming is forgotten, erased, after having caused only a very fleeting crisis and with no consequence in the after life.

G. - VARIOUS REPRESENTATIONS.

I. - Right and Left.

The *pe* of the pucus and klihbrīs often make a distinction between the right and the left. The right represents the good side. It is the side of supernatural beings who do not harm man whilst the left side is that of the evil spirits. In the *pe* of Daure, it tells how Kayo-rhini (*kayo*: right) gave birth to two offspring. One was born out of the right nostril and the other, named Pumiprahwetewai, from the left. The latter (male or

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[11] By personal fault, we mean a failure in an individual's moral code which only affects certain persons and only concerns them. A social misdemeanour is, in contrast, a violation of the moral code of the society and is sanctioned by the society. Numerous examples of personal faults and social misdemeanours have been given in the chapter dealing with the social organization.

female?) with Daure, began to harm men. Remember also the popular belief which holds that, when the head of the foetus is on the right of the mother's womb, the child will be a boy. (The birth of a boy, for a Gurung, is a happier event than the birth of a girl.)

2. - Numbers.

Nine (*ku*) is the number most frequently used. It is connected at the same time with that which is beneficent and harmful. In the *pe*, one finds the expressions: "the nine souls" (*plah-ku*), "the nine spirits" (*mõh-ku*), "the nine Poba brothers" (*poba-ku*), "the nine ladders and the nine bridges" (which seperate the land of the dead from that of the living).

Nine is also a unit of time. Krõlu-pucu lived in Cõ for nine years. Kleh-prayõti dwelt nine times nine years (*kul-ku-dĩ*) in the mountain. In a phrase indicating a progression, nine is the final term of that progression ("he walked one, two, three, five, nine days; he climbed one, two, three, five, nine ladders; he struck one, two, three, five, nine blows").

Moreover, nine is the masculine number whilst seven is the feminine. There are nine *caẽ* (male spirits), but seven *pum* (witches). A-pa-kahrab-kleh had nine sons and seven daughters. When the priest shakes the grains of rice above the head of a sick person, he does it nine times if it is a man and seven if it is a woman.

A hundred indicates a large quantity. "Kleh-prayõti had one sheep. He soon had a hundred, then nine hundred". "The nine Poba brothers went hunting, they killed a hundred deer and a hundred birds."

3. - Birds.

Birds have a predominant role in the beliefs of the pucus and klihbrĩs. In the course of the preceding chapters, we have briefly indicated the place of the bird in the priest's costume, in the ritual, and in the religious concepts. Here I propose to gather together all the beliefs relative to the bird, to interpret them and to state precisely in what measure they agree with the other beliefs of the religions of the pucu and klihbrĩ.

The paraphernalia of the pucu includes some feathers and a bird's beak. The feathers are placed in a crown round the head. These are

usually pheasant feathers, but there is no rule to my knowledge which defines what sort of feather should be used. The bird's beak is carried under the armpit. It does not belong to a type of bird living in Gurung country. "The bird beaks which we use come from the North (Tibet?)", my informants told me. The klihbrī wears neither feathers nor a beak, but holds the figure of a bird carved out of wood in his hand.

Certain *pe* throw some light on the significance of these objects. The most interesting of the histories is that of *sirlo tohrlo* told by the klihbrī. (Remember that is was unfortunately not possible to make a translation of this; we only have a summary of this *pe* which was dictated to me by a klihbrī priest). The first *pae* was celebrated at the death of the son of Kleh-karuri who participated, it seems, in the creation of the world. There were some birds who officiated : the bird called *kalāko* (kalchora ?, nep.) played the role of the klihbrī, and the bird called *kyu-name* (dhobi charo ?, nep.) that of the pucu. On the other hand, in a *pe* of the pucu, it speaks of the ancestor of this priest called Khogrẽ-pucu. These instances allow us to make two comparisons. The carved bird of the klihbrī is called *kalāko* like the bird-klihbrī described in *sirlo tohrlo*. As for the pucu's bird beak, it is called *kho-grẽ* or *khõ-grẽ* like the pucu ancestor. From all the evidence, the priest, be it either pucu or klihbrī, wants to take the form of a bird and has translated this wish literally by wearing an ornithomorphic costume. We will see later to which belief this trait corresponds.

Among all the birds, the vulture must particularly hold our attention. In the *pe*, it appears as the king, the lord of the sky. The vulture, master (*kleh*) of the sky, is opposed to the snake, lord of the earth (cf. *sirlo tohrlo*, [klihbrī]). Moreover, certain Gurungs make a comparison between the words sky and vulture, and earth and snake; *mubru* (or *mobru*) means vulture; *sabru* snake; *mu* sky; *sa* earth, which shows well that the vulture is lord of the sky while the snake is the lord of the earth. It is of course impossible to say if the similarities revealed are intentional or due to coincidence. The *pe* of *a-pa kahrab-kleh* calls the vulture *ceh kelbo*, the bird-king. The vulture thus appears in the *pe* as king of the air, lord of the sky, an idea which I have often heard expressed by the Gurungs.

Is there any direct connection between the vulture and the sun? The *pe* do not mention it; on the other hand, it seems that there may have been a connection between the vulture, the priest and the sun. In

sirlo tohrlo we are told that "Kleh-karuri sent a bird, the *lõbor* (lata khasiuri ?, nep.) with a mission to kill the sun and the moon, as the nine suns and the nine moons had carried off the son of Kleh-karuri since they shone at the same time. When the sun and the moon had been stabbed, the world was plunged into darkness. Kleh-karuri [12] sent another bird, the *tini-pucu* (word for word : "sun-pucu") to give life back to the sun and the moon. In the word *tini-pucu* the connection between the sun and the pucu is clearly expressed. On the other hand, in the histories of the *pucu* the vulture often plays a role in connection with the pucu. Thus, Krõlu-pucu changes himself into a vulture, as the ancestors of pucus had the power to take the form of that bird. We are therefore lead to think that there is a link between sun, pucu and vulture, a connection which seems to be confirmed by the fact that the *tini-pucu* is a bird.

These connections between priest and vulture, priest and bird, take on their full meaning if we consider the mass of beliefs of the klihbrĩs and, above all, of the pucus. One of the essential powers of a priest consists in travelling in space without the body moving. He projects his spirit outside his person. Another is the effect that the priest has on the world of spirits and souls. But it seems that the supernatural world may be the world of the atmosphere, a world which encourages the movement through space of supernatural beings.

Thus, according to the beliefs of the pucus, *cha* and *pleh*, old age and good luck, are two birds. The history of *lemku* tells how one day a priest discovered the wandering soul of Lemku who had not been able to rejoin the country of the souls of the ancestors. The soul had the shape of a cow hide and a bird's beak as it was between the earth and the sky, his *pae* not having been celebrated. In the ceremony of *sildothi-ba*, Sildonaldo also takes the form of a bird, a *poro* (pheasant). Lastly, remember that the return of a sick man's soul is accompanied by the chicken flapping its wings in evidence. These examples tend to show that the world of the spirits and souls is like that of the birds. By taking the form of a bird, the priest can thus penetrate into the supernatural world by projecting himself outside himself, and exerting his power over the spirits and souls.

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[12]It seems that in Tibetan *karuri* = *garudi* = *garuda* (skrt.) : vulture, Vishnu's chariot.

One of the main aids of the priests is the chicken (*ho*, the word used in the *pe* of the pucu, and which is used both in the sense of "hen" and "cock"), because it belongs to both the land of the sky and the land of the earth. After its creation, it is told in the *pe* of *hõ-da*, the chicken went from the crossroads of the land of the earth to the crossroads of the land of the sky. There it had wings of gold and silver and its song resounded in the land of the sky and the land of the earth. Then the chicken returned to the crossroads of the land of the earth and began to eat the grain sown by man. Also it is natural to see the pucu using the double nature of the chicken on many occasions. The latter can prove that the lost soul had arrived by flapping its wings because, belonging to the world of the sky, to the world of birds and spirits, it knows when the soul has arrived. For the same reason, it can be given in exchange for a lost soul.

4. - Other Animals.

The *pe* of the pucus have a lot more animals in them apart from birds and goats, but their roles are secondary and badly defined. Nevertheless, I will say a few words on the spider and the cow *kandne*.

The spider (*tahnarpẽ* or *tahnarpẽh*) is the friend (*a-gu*) of man. They use her as a messenger, scrupulously doing what she is asked. The *pe* also talks of the cow *kandne*. My informants could not specify what kind of cow is meant. Some have suggested that it is a yak, but that nowadays one can no longer find this type. This interpretation could be explained by the fact that when the Gurungs settled on the southern slopes of the Himalayas, they had to give up raising yak which could not be done below 3000 metres [13]. The cow *kandne* saved the nine Poba from the evil spirit Ghaesar-phi, and brought wealth to Kundru-khe. In a word, she always acts as a benevolent animal.

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[13] The story of the creation narrates that certain domestic ani mals were created: the chicken, the goat, the sheep, the cow, the buffalo, the horse, and the yak. There is nothing about a cow *kandne*. All these animals are reared today by the Gurungs, except the yak.

H. - FIRE.

Fire was created at Krõ by the nine Poba. They rubbed two pieces of wood together and the friction caused fire to spring forth. "The fire warms man when he is cold, reassures him when he is afraid, helps at the birth of the living and at the disposal of the dead (by cremation)." Fire, like the element earth, has a father and mother. They did not create it. It is the fire which reproduces itself, which is regenerated continually by the union of the two sexes. Unfortunately, the fire which helps man gave birth to a white and green son who escaped and burnt the country, killing and destroying everything. This represents the destructive fire. The youngest son of A-pa-kahrab-kleh is the king of fire and has the job of guarding the destructive son so that fire may always be a benevolent element for the world of the living.

I. - THE PRIEST AND HIS POWER.

In this section, we will deal mainly with the pucus and occasionally with the klihbrĩs. Most of the *pe* of the pucus tell of a time long ago when the world was created; the ancestors of the pucus practised for the first time the ceremonies which are still carried on today; the main spirits appeared. The acts of a pucu (and of a klihbrĩ) are valid because they are identical to those carried out by their ancestors. Each of the gestures which he makes is described in the *pe* which he recites.

The first pucus, Krõlu-pucu and Pundul-pucu, lived at Krõ where there were no harmful spirits. But they went to Cõ where men needed their help to fight against spirits. No *pe* indicates how they acquired their knowledge, but in the *pe* of *pundul pucu*, it is said that the priest transmitted his knowledge orally to his daughter who then passed it on to her brother. Remember that, nowadays, a pucu transmits his knowledge orally to a future pucu. There is no initiation ceremony. Only a final examination allows one to judge whether a student pucu can be called a priest or not. The ancestors of the pucus had powers which my informants recognised they no longer possess.

The *pe* tell how the pucus could leap over a rainbow, change themselves into a vulture, and make the wind blow. They knew the plant which gave life to the dead.

In contrast, the costume which the priest wears and the instruments (cf. p. 311-312) he uses are identical to those of his ancestors and have the same powers. Without the costume, and especially without the instruments, the pucu cannot officiate because his paraphernalia has in itself a power which the priest must have at his disposal. He depends as much on this paraphernalia as it depends on him. When the inhabitants of Cõ saw Krolu-pucu for the first time dressed in his accoutrements they were frightened, but Krõlu-pucu reassured them and told them that they were his knowledge and his power. The pucus think that their costume is conceived in such a way that, when the evil spirits see it, they are terrified and dare not attack. This costume acts as a protective armour.

The *pe* give nothing precisely on the origin and meaning of the different parts of the accoutrements of a priest, but there is a lot on the origin and the power of the pucu's main instruments. Each instrument has its own *pe*. Pucu and drum (*ṅah*) are inseparable. The pucu uses the drum in nearly all ceremonies. Its construction requires the sacrifice of a goat. The *pe* of *ṅahrdo* tells that the *ṅah* cannot vibrate if a goat is not sacrificed. The text does not indicate clearly whether the sacrifice is offered to a divinity which helps in the making of the drum, or to the drum itself. The sacrifice also gives it *so*, "breath", which enables it to be heard everywhere: "If one hits it in the east, it vibrates in the south, if one hits it in the south, it vibrates in the west...". Its vibration is its power and carries its power [14]. It goes where the wandering soul of the sick or dead is found. It is heard by the spirits and affects them. The *ṅah* allows for the exchange of the soul, of "giving life to that which is dead", of "finding that which is lost", and of "controlling evil spirits". Everything the pucu (or the klihbrĩ) can do, the *ṅah* can. It is impossible

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[14] Mircia ELIADE (*Le Chamanisme*, Payot, 1951 p.162) writes: "The shamanistic function of the drum is for magical music and not the magic of antidemonic noise. The proof of this is that, even where the drum is replaced by the bow, as among the Leleb Tatars and the Altaians, it is always a musical instrument which one needs, and the bow is used as a one stringed instrument." This opinion is confirmed by what we have said of the drum and bow used as a one stringed instrument amongst the Gurungs (cf. p. 345).

to disassociate the pucu from his drum; the first knows how to use the second, and the second gives its power to the first to use.

In varying degrees, the other drums and instruments of the pucu have similar qualities to those of the *ṅah*.

Study of the *pe* allows us to form a picture of the pucu, which strongly resembles that of the klihbrī. The pucu is the only human being who can enter into relations with supernatural beings and protect men when those beings are harmful. If men doubt their knowledge, they are exposed to the sight of the raging spirits then opposing them. The pucu cannot act alone. Not only does he perpetuate the actions of his ancestors by reproducing those they have always done, but he invokes them at the beginning of each ceremony so that they shall be at his side. His power comes from that of all the pucu ancestors. But these ancestors do not possess him (as in the case of the *dhame*). The priest is no longer possessed by a supernatural being. He never goes into a trance. The pucu never improvises and can never change that which has been transmitted to him by his ancestors. If he does not obey this rule, his actions will have no effect. If he does not follow the custom (*pe*) during the *pae*, the soul of the deceased will never reach the land of the dead (cf. history of *Lemku*). [APPENDIX H]

The persona of the priest can divide itself into two. When he officiates, even though his body remains seated in the midst of the audience, he can go away from the place of the ceremony, leaving to look for a soul or to accompany one to the land of the dead. The last stage of the *pae* (*serka*) leaves one in no doubt on this subject. The pucu acts as psychopomp, accompanying the soul of the deceased step by step, then he returns to the village alone after having closed the gates of *Kro* and destroyed the nine bridges and the nine ladders which connect this land to the house of the deceased. When he returns, the priest shakes himself "to shake off anything which might have attached itself to his clothes during his journey to the land of the dead".

But the journey never takes an ecstatic form. This is replaced by the recitation. What the priest recites is what he does when he lives (or when his soul lives) outside himself in the world of spirits and souls. It seems that this form of journey originated from contact with the literary influence of Tibetan Buddhism. Nowadays, a priest never affirms that his ancestors had the power to enter into a trance. On the contrary, he often

speaks of the time when "the pucus and the klihbrĩs had books, like the lamas, the reading of which gave them perfect knowledge" [120].

CHAPTER XVII

RESPECTIVE PLACES OF THE FOUR CO-EXISTENT RELIGIONS IN THE GURUNG COUNTRY.

The religious beliefs of the Gurungs originated from very diverse influences represented by the pucus, klihbrīs, lamas and brahmins. A legend told by the pucu, klihbrī and lama specifies the position given to each of these priests. Note immediately that this legend is a fanciful adaptation of a story of the competition between the Buddhist lamas and the Bon-po priests in Tibet in the first era of Buddhism [1].

"A long time ago, the lama, the pucu, the klihbrī and the brahmin decided to organise a competition to determine which of them had the greatest knowledge. The losers were to pierce their drums and burn their books. When they had sealed their agreement, the ordeal began. In order to win, it was necessary to reach Manasarovar (a Tibetan lake at the foot of Mount Kailash), the following morning just before the first rays of the rising sun lit that place. The lama and the brahmin spent the night sitting and meditating. The pucu and the klihbrī flew in the night on their drum (*ṅah*). The dawn surprised the lama and brahmin in their meditation. To arrive on time, they travelled on a ray of the rising sun, reaching Manasarovar at the same time as it did. The two other priests flying on their drums arrived a few minutes late and lost the competition. The pucu and the klihbrī burnt their books and pierced their drums. ("That is why, nowadays, the *ṅah* is only covered with a skin on one side whilst the lama's drum is covered on both sides.") The four priests then went to Ganga (the country of the Gange?). The brahmin got there first. He took the roots of a tree (?,) which gave him complete and

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[1] Sarat Chandra DAS, "Dispute between.....", *J.A.S. of Bengal*, vol. L, 1881, p. 206-211.

perfect knowledge. The klihbrī took the trunk of the tree. Thus he was able to celebrate the burial, the *pae*, and *tha-sō tēh*. The lama took the flowers... The pucu came last. He received what remained at the top of the tree. That is why he celebrates..." This story (which was told in this way by a pucu) allows us to draw several conclusions. It is in fact made up of two parts. In the first, the lama and the brahmin give themselves the best position at the expense of the pucu and klihbrī who have to destroy their books. This event establishes the superiority of the two foreign religions, Buddhism and Hinduism which were more advanced, over the two local religions, those of the pucu and the klihbrī. The second part, despite its obscurities, shows that despite their defeat the pucu and the klihbrī continue to exist beside the brahmin and the lama. Each priest has his own field of activity and becomes a specialist. One has here a division of religious tasks. Let me say, however, that the story has been conceived by authors who wished to affirm the superiority of Brahminism and its influence on the Gurungs. The role which they have given to the brahmin does not correspond in any way to that which he performs nowadays amongst the Gurungs. The brahmin is only called into a Gurung family in the case of a birth and a marriage, celebrations during which none of the other priests intervene. The brahmin is also asked to draw up the horoscope after birth and to chase bad luck (*gra*) from the house. In fact, very few families call in a brahmin. The lama, the pucu and the klihbrī can officiate in all the other ceremonies with different rituals (to fight against evil spirits, funerals, etc.).

But while the brahmin always officiates alone, it happens, during funerals for example, that the pucu celebrates the ritual with the lama or the klihbrī. These last three priests have evidently easy and frequent mutual contacts. They are Gurungs and often live in the same village whilst the brahmin always belongs to a strange community and strives to mark the difference between his caste and that of the Gurungs. This difference in status explains, to a certain extent, why Brahminism has not penetrated as much as Buddhism in the Gurung valleys. Buddhism has its priests in Gurung country and nothing distinguishes them socially from the other inhabitants. The brahmin, in contrast, remains a stranger who considers himself to be of superior status. But the Gurungs, as do all the inhabitants of the highlands of Nepal, and even the Newars, only accept the idea of caste with reticence.

The lama and the brahmin have, however, certain traits in common. They have a prestige which the pucu and klihbrı do not possess. This prestige is given them by their books, by the splendour of their ceremonies, and by their superior status.

The Gurungs have a lot of respect for that which is written. We have seen the importance given to the fact that the pucu and the klihbrī had their books burnt. In contrast, the lama and the brahmin read their prayers and consult horoscopes written, or printed, decorated with illustrations. A lot of Gurungs have had a horoscope made by brahmins and, although they often can't understand them, they are proud of unrolling the scroll of paper covered with letters, figures, and diagrams of different colours.

The splendour of the Buddhist ceremonies also impresses the villagers: an altar decorated with rice statuettes in very elaborate shapes, *thaṅ-ka* hung on the wall, devil masks, one hundred and eight small oil lamps lit at funerals, long robes and headgear of the priests, the deafening noise of their drums, cymbals, conch shells, and trumpets made from shinbones.

In the same way, a marriage celebrated by a brahmin requires ceremonial which the ordinary Gurung marriage does not have (procession, musical instruments of all sorts, etc.)

All the village lamas are Carjat (at least in the west of the Gurung country). For their part, the Brahmins belong to the highest caste in Nepal. The rich families, who are usually Carjat, always call in a lama at the time of funerals. These same families are also those which use the costly services of a brahmin at the time of a birth or a marriage, not only because they are often the most Hinduistic, but because they wish to imitate the behaviour of the caste which governs Nepal. Even though they are not in agreement with the idea of caste, these rich families wish to acquire a social status corresponding to their economic status in the Nepalese hierarchy.

If the pucu and klihbrī have not got the prestige of the lama and still less that of the brahmin, they are undeniably closer in their beliefs to the large majority of the Gurungs. The *pe* are rich in references relating to ancestral traditions. Ceremonies like the *pae* make clear certain relations which characterise Gurung society. Even the language used by the pucus, though a little bit different from modern Gurung, is understood well enough by the majority of listeners who can thus really

participate in the religious ceremonies. In this way the lay people help the priests to carry out their ritual. The pucu is, without any doubt, the priest whose beliefs are best known by the mass of highland peoples and is the most representative of Gurung ideology. The total number of pucus living in the Gurung country is much higher than that of the lamas and the klihbrīs.

My informants were unanimous in affirming that during the last eighty to one hundred years, this number has not diminished and seems even to be slightly increasing. (This could be explained in part by the increase in population.)

In contrast, the religion of the klihbrī is declining in certain areas. In the Modi Valley there are only two klihbrīs[2]. In other valleys further to the east, the drop is less obvious but is none the less felt. The reasons for this decline are not very clear. Buddhism has certainly progressed during the last decades among the Gurungs as among many other populations of Nepal. The number of lamas has increased, but at the expense of the klihbrīs. In the Modi valley, few funerals are now celebrated by klihbrıs. The lamas are asked in their place to officiate with the pucus. We have indicated that the lama had more prestige than the pucu and klihbrī, and this could partly explain the success of the lamas. But why has the klihbrī suffered from this development and not the pucu? The beliefs of the klihbrı are quite close to those of the pucu, but less elaborate than the latter. The *pe* and the ceremonies of the klihbrī are short and limited in number. Beside Lamaism and the religion of the pucu, that of the klihbrī can only hold a secondary place which the development of Lamaism has made precarious. It is also necessary to remember that the klihbrī only understands a few words of the language that he uses, which prevents any precise knowledge of his beliefs by the lay people. The instruction of a young priest is difficult because he must mechanically learn the words which he does not understand.

Buddhism in its Tibetan form is extending slowly in the northern villages of Gurung country, in those most in contact with the Buddhist lands of the northern slopes of the Himalayas. The progression of Lamaism is from north to south, from the upper valleys to the lower

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[2] Number of priests in the upper valley of the Modi and in the Barudi valley (cf. map, fig. 3): 14 pucus, 9 lamas, 2 klihbris.

valleys. Nevertheless, it develops alongside the religion of the pucu without weakening the latter. Lamaism has not yet taken on a regional character amongst the Gurungs. It has not adapted to their traditions and still represents a foreign ideology taught in Tibetan, a language not known by the lay persons and little understood by the lamas themselves. At this moment, the religion of the lama and that of the pucu co-exist without harming each other, and each in the eyes of the Gurungs has advantages which complements the other. The funeral ceremony and above all that of the *pae* illustrates this situation well.[121]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

(Numbered in square brackets in the text)[3]

1. The word "mercenary" has derogatory connotations, implying that those who enlist in foreign armies are doing degrading and undignified work, solely for money. The use of this word to describe the Gurkha troops has recently been questioned by intellectuals, journalists and ex-British Gurkha officers.[4]

Gurkhas neither sell themselves, nor are they sold by the Government of Nepal. Recruitment takes place according to strict policy requirements and is covered by bi-lateral and tripartite agreements between the governments of Nepal, Britain and India.

Gurkhas have fought against dictatorship and tyranny. They have been decorated with the highest awards for their gallantry in two world wars, and have received pensions for two or three generations as regular army men. They are quite different from the private armies of drug barons and are not terrorists who kill for money. Furthermore, they command considerable prestige throughout the world. [C.B.G.]

2. Within and between Gurung villages there have only been slight changes in the bridges and paths since Pignède's visit. The present situation in Mohoriya is much as it was then, except for the fact that a large motorable road is being built from Pokhara to Baglung. When this is completed, it will be possible to drive to within about three hours of Mohoriya. But a very steep climb up will always mean that the village has to be approached on foot. A slight exception to the rule that all goods have to be carried in on the human back is the presence of four pack

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[3] Initials at the end of certain notes mark specific authorship:
C.B.G. = C.B. Ghotane
I.B.G. = I.B. Gurung
J.P. = Judith Pettigrew
Y.T. = Yarjung Tamu

[4] 'To Fight or Not to Fight'. *Himal*, July/August 1991.

mules in Mohoriya, which are used to bring up salt, rice, kerosene and other goods to the shop, which is also new.

More generally, Gurung territory, like the rest of Nepal, has been considerably affected by the building of new roads linking the towns. A major road from Kathmandu to Pokhara, and a new road from Pokhara to the Terai, were built in the 1970's. These have had enormous effects.

The other major change has been in air-transport. There is a much improved air-link between Pokhara and Kathmandu; and Kathmandu now has an international airport. This only indirectly affects the Gurungs, by encouraging an increasing number foreign of tourists. As the possibility of trade by air directly to Europe is realised, the effects on the commercialisation of the Gurung economy may increase. Very few Gurungs ever use air-transport at present.

3. Mr. Kawakita seems to have visited the Manang Valley on the high plateau of the Annapurna range, to the extreme north west of Lamjung. He said that these Gurungs were Lama Gurungs. In fact there is no Lama clan in Gurung society. Lama is the name given to those Gurungs who learnt Lamaism a few generations ago. [C.B.G.]

4. The origins of the Gurungs, Magars, Tamangs, Tharus, Sunwar and Danawar of central Nepal seem to be connected with the ancestors of the Kirats, an ancient Indian tribal group, who occupied the northern area of the Indo-Gangetic plain and the foothills of the whole Himalayan range which extends from the Kashmir valley to Assam, Nagaland and Manipur.

The earliest civilisation of the Kathmandu valley was founded by Kirats. They lived in the foothills and the large inner valleys of Nepal. They appear to have fled to the green mountain tops for safety after the overthrow of the Kirat ruler in the first century A.D. They were pushed further north with the invasion of Indo-Aryans, who infiltrated Nepal in great numbers during the period of the Muslim attacks on India from the fifteenth century (cf. Legend I, p. 159). [C.B.G.]

5. The languages of most of the ethnic groups of Nepal belong to the Tibeto-Burman language group, including Newari. In general, the Gurungs and other groups such as the Magars, Rais, Limbus, Tharus,

Tamangs and Thakalis, are very close. They are not devout Buddhists like the Tibetans. The religion of the *pucu* and *klihbrī* does not resemble ancient Tibetan Bonism. We do not find any pre-Buddhist or Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Gurung country. Gurungs do not know the teachings of Lord Buddha as the Tibetans do. Gurung Lamas learned some of the ritual texts of Tibetan Buddhism a few generations ago. The most popular text is that used in funerals and the *pae*. The *pae* is in reality the funeral ritual of the *pucu* and *klihbrī*. Only in recent times have Plih-gi Gurungs used lama for the *pae*.

In culture, religion and custom (clothing, food, songs, dances, etc.), the Gurungs do not resemble Tibetans, neither are the old Gurung family names of the Modi and Kaski areas similar to Tibetan. [C.B.G.]

6. Nathu Gurung and Pralad Gurung were of the Plon (Lamichhane) clan from the village of Chaur in Kaski district. Their descendants still live in Chaur. Nathu and Pralad had taken a leading role in the conquests of Kumaon, Almoda and Garwal. They led their soldiers with legendary bravery. Finally, in 1804, they conquered all three states of modern Himachal Pradesh in India. It was said that the two warriors had divine or invincible power, the mere mention of their names frightened their enemies. They were rewarded with lands for their exceptional service to the nation. [C.B.G.]

7. By 1990, British Army recruitment had been severely reduced and by 1991 there was even talk of the British Gurkha regiments being disbanded. Similarly, fewer young Gurungs are enlisting in the Indian Army as the educational requirements now expected are beyond many hill villagers. Soldiers on retirement no longer return to their natal villages but settle in the growing towns, such as Pokhara.

8. The "Gurkha Parishad" was the political party of the feudal Rana family, but there is no evidence that they ever did anything to help the non-Aryan peoples of Nepal. Furthermore, they were thrown out of power in 1951, and from then onwards both their economic and political position was weak, so they would not have been able to defend the interests of the non-Aryans had they wanted to. [C.B.G.]

9. Though the visits of brahmin priests are infrequent, in reality a number of Hindu customs have been adopted and play a major role in the social life of the Gurungs. These are often followed without a brahmin being present. Some examples of those affecting children are as follows:

a. *Sanskara* - On the third day following the birth of a child, the day, date and time of birth is noted and given to a brahmin who makes the child's horoscope.

b. *Chhaitoon* - On the sixth day following birth it is believed that God comes to determine the fate of the child. Oil lamps are lit to give light, incense is burnt, and fruit and flowers are offered to the God and Goddess. The parents and relatives pray for a good fate and future for the child. The relatives stay awake all night.

c. *Nowaran* (child-washing ceremony) - On the ninth day after birth for a son, and seventh for a daughter, the child is washed in holy water. This water is purified with five types of metal, gold, silver, copper, brass and iron. The child is shown to the sun. For a son, a hole is made in the ear lobes, for a daughter, in the left nostril. The name of the child is announced.

d. *Pasani* (food ceremony) - Six months after birth for a son, five months for a daughter, the child is dressed in new clothes. All kinds of delicious foods are prepared and placed round the child, and it is given the food to taste and pieces of gold or silver. Close kin visit and give presents to the child.

e. *Chhewar* (hair-cutting ceremony) - This is performed for boys between the age of 8 and 12, on a day found to be auspicious in the child's horoscope. He is taken to a cow shed where his hair is cut by a man who's horoscope is good on that day. All the hair is cut but for a tuft at the back (*asnu*). The cut hair is collected by a woman to stop it falling on the ground. The boy is then given a new *topi*. Girls do not have their hair cut, but get a new dress. Relatives and villagers dance and feast. From this day, the child can participate in the religious activities of the family. [C.B.G.]

10. Pignède provides a useful description of the old government system, which was abolished shortly after his visit, in 1960. This was replaced in 1962 by the *Panchayat* system, which lasted until 1990, but is now defunct. Hill villages, such as Mohoriya, were grouped with

neighbouring villages into Village Panchayats which contained 3,000 to 5,000 persons. Each Village Panchayat was divided into nine wards. Each ward would elect a member to represent it on the Village Panchayat, and they in turn would appoint one of their number as headman, or Pradan Pancha. A number of Village Panchayats were grouped into a District Panchayat. These elected members to the National Assembly or Rasthriya Panchayat. Although there is a greater turn-over of personnel, many Gurungs felt that the central government was almost as remote as it always was. Only one or two Gurungs have ever been elected to the Rasthriya Panchayat. At the village level, the grouping of several villages into one Panchayat, often effectively took away local power. Mohoriya, for instance, was subsumed into a Panchayat which included nine other villages. Thus only two people, the representatives of the two wards covering Mohoriya, attend the Village Panchayat meetings. In another village, we were told the Village Panchayat only met irregularly and infrequently and its powers were very limited. It is not surprising that despite its autocratic flavour, some people regret the passing of the *krōh* system, arguing that the old *krōh* were the most knowledgeable and experienced men in the community, whereas Pradhan Pancha's were often merely ambitious.

Now, in 1992, the Panchayat system has been replaced in the villages by the 'Gaun Bikaas Semitee' (Village Development Committee). Local elections have not, as yet, been held.

11. While Pignède thought that there was a general preponderance of males over females in most Gurung villages, the ratio I discovered among Gurungs in Thak and on re-visiting Mohoriya in 1969 did not support his findings (cf. Macfarlane 1976, Table 15:5). In both villages females outnumbered males.

However, in 1990, we took a census of Mohoriya within the geographical limits of Pignède's census. The total population, including men and young people living away from the village but with family settled there, numbered 328 - 169 men and 159 women. This shows a fall in the total population since 1958 of 33%. Furthermore, the number of Gurungs as opposed to Untouchables had fallen. Only 67% were now Gurungs whereas Pignède noted 85%. Unlike Pignède, we have included those originally Magar families among the Gurungs as they now speak of themselves as Gurungs and are accepted by the rest as such.

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Although in total, men outnumber women, among the Untouchables women outnumber men - 56 women to 51 men. This makes the figure for the Gurung population even more extreme - 103 women to 118 men, thus supporting Pignède's original finding.

12. In 1990 the percentage of Gurung men between 19 and 45 serving as soldiers had also fallen. Pignède found 53%, now there were only 33% (12 men). Conversely, the numbers away doing civilian work abroad had increased from 9% to 25% (9 men). However, the base figure of 36 Gurung men in this age range is too small to mean very much.

The Gurung population is marginally older with 56% under 30 years of age, but the Untouchables are much younger with 69% under 30.

13. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 260-62, provides comparative diagrams of the age of Gurung women at first and last child-birth in Mohoriya and Thak. The figures were based on Pignede's field notes and work in Thak. They showed a broadly similar situation in both villages; in Thak the modal age for first child-birth was 20, the mean 23, in Mohoriya the mode was 23. The mean age for last child-birth was 35.8 in Thak and 37 for Mohoriya.

14. Pignède states that Gurungs feel great repugnance towards abortion. As I wrote (cf. Macfarlane, 1976, p. 245), "I did not notice such a feeling among the several men and women with whom I discussed the subject. Their tone implied no particular criticism of the practice; it depended on the particular situation as to whether it was a justified measure. They all thought that the only occasion when such methods would be used would be when a child had been conceived outside the normal marital relationship."

15. Since Pignède wrote this, there has been a dramatic fall in infant mortality rates among the Gurungs, as with other ethnic groups in Nepal, with a halving of the rates at least. (Cf. C.P.Gurung, 1988, Table 6:1, p. 190 and *passim*). There are two main reasons for this. The introduction of piped water into many villages has partially eliminated many water-borne diseases, particularly dysentery and gastro-enteritis.

A series of vaccination campaigns have controlled a number of epidemic diseases, for instance smallpox, typhoid and measles. These two changes have more than compensated for what is probably a worsening diet for young children and their mothers.

16. The army ranks listed are incorrect. They should be as follows:

BRITISH ARMY	INDIAN ARMY
Rifleman	Sepoy
Lance corporal	Lesnaik (LNK)
Corporal	Naik (NK)
Sergeant	Havildar
Sergeant Major	Havildar Major
Lieutenant (QGO[5])	Jemadar or Naik Subedar
Captain (QGO)	Subedar
Major (QGO)	Subedar Major

The Nepalese Army also use the Indian Army ranks. [C.B.G.]

17. In the upper Modi valley, Dangsing (Dana sing) is one of the oldest settlements. There are ruins of two forts (*koe*); one is on a hill at the top of the village from where the whole area can be seen in case of enemy attack, the other is in the middle of the village itself. Dangsing was the capital of a small kingdom which included the villages of Sabit, Gerbõ, Sarkyu, Khyũ, Tikhyã and Birethati. After Prithvi Narayan's consolidation of greater Nepal, this small kingdom was broken up under the control of six *krõh*, five of whom were from the Kon clan. Mohoriya was founded in 1780 by Saawai-Ron of the Kon clan of Dangsing.

Ghandrung (Kõta) is the largest settlement in the whole Gurung area. At one time it was ruled by a king. Later it was divided between seven *krõh*. Like Dangsing, it had two forts at strategic points. [C.B.G.]

18. The word *jat* has created much discontent among the Gurungs. The Gurung *vamsavali* was re-constructed by Brahmins, by Bhoj Raj Paudyal in the fifteenth century, and again by Shekar Nath Subedi in the twentieth century (cf. Legend II, p. 160). In fact, there was no

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[5] Queen's Gurkha Officer.

concept of caste among them and it was not part of their social system. The terms "Carjat" and "Solahjat" are not Gurung. They describe themselves as Plih-gi and Ku-gi (which means simply 'four house' and 'nine house'). Furthermore, the Lama clan was a Brahmin creation. A few generations ago, some of the members of the Plih-gi learnt Lamaism. These Gurung lamas are not like Tibetan or Sherpa lamas. They study the Tibetan alphabet for only one or two years, and only learn to read a few of the books, especially those concerning the funeral ritual. Most of the lamas do not know the meaning of the sentences they read. They know very little about Buddhism. The Plih-gi started to use these lamas for funerals about three generations ago. Previously, Lamaist or Buddhist rituals were never performed. The ancient priest of the Plih-gi was a Ku-gi *pucu* or *klihbrī*.

There is no superior or inferior caste in Gurung society. If asked his *jat*, a Gurung with not say "Plih-gi" or "Ku-gi", he will answer "I am a Gurung". [C.B.G.]

19. By 1990, the housing pattern had changed considerably. In particular, there had been a decline in the number of houses in the area covered by Pignède's map. Thirty nine dwellings mapped in 1958 had disappeared and three were empty. Sixteen new dwelling had been built, but a number of these were in the Blacksmiths' area, not in the main settlement. There had been a significant increase in the number of houses built on the paths down to the river and in the rice lands. These new houses were mainly inhabited by non-Gurungs.

20. Pignède's remark that all the Gurungs are bilingual was wrong in 1958 and is wrong, in a different way, now. Leaving aside the thousands of Eastern Gurungs who have not spoken Gurung for centuries, the situation seems to be as follows. In 1958 and still in the 1970's, there were pockets of older people who only spoke Gurung. For instance, I was told in 1969 that a number of older people, especially women, did not understand or speak Nepali. Such has been the linguistic revolution, the effect of increased dominance by the towns, the radio and universal education in Nepali, that the situation is now reversed. There are probably only a very few old people who live in remote villages still do not understand Nepali. On the other hand, there is a growing number of Gurungs who cannot speak their own language, particularly the

children of those who have moved to Pokhara and other towns where they are no longer living in predominantly Gurung communities. With the loss of language goes a loss of knowledge about the religious and economic ways of the village. Within the villages themselves, the normal language for informal conversation is still Gurung, but all formal meetings and often the conversation between adult men, is in Nepali.

21. At the end of a woman's menstruation, she will usually wash her hair and her clothes. With the advent of taps, women wash themselves in public more than they probably did in Pignède's time. As he says, they rarely strip naked, they do, however, wash their bodies while wearing a *lungi*. [J.P.]

22. The sanitary situation has changed very little in most Gurung villages. The fields and streets are still used for defecation, though with piped water the health implications are not so serious. In a few villages, and notably Ghandrung, under the stimulus of the Annapurna Area Conservation Area Project, pit latrines have been introduced into many gardens besides the houses. This solution is more difficult in crowded villages such as Siklis, though already the scheme has been extended there and some success has been reported.

23. Smoking has declined throughout Gurung villages. Whereas almost all adults smoked cigarettes up to the mid 1970's, now far fewer people smoke though women seem less inclined to give up the habit than men. The Tailors and Blacksmiths are now the main smoking group.

24. Pignède noted the introduction of western-style clothing in the 1960's and the process has accelerated. One now seldom sees the full traditional costumes described by Pignède, though a few of the older women still wear the velvet blouses, *tiki* and *phogi*. Almost all clothes are bought in towns or abroad, or the cloth is brought up from the bazaar and made up in the village. The normal dress for girls is a skirt and blouse, for boys, trousers and shirt. Wrist-watches and shoes are now common, though most villagers still do most of their work without shoes on, and are thus prone to cuts, thorns and split heels. Pignède only describes twelve out of the thirty-two kinds of garment noted in Thak in 1969 (cf. Macfarlane, 1976, pp.100-1).

25. Pignède describes some of the major forms of Gurung jewellery (for others and their prices, see Macfarlane, 1976, p.107). During the last thirty years there has been a dramatic decrease in the amount of gold worn by Gurung villagers. Hardly anyone in Thak or Mohoriyā wears more than a small nose or ear-ring. When we first asked about this, people suggested it was because there had been thefts and attacks on women, and so they were frightened to openly wear gold. But after taking comparative inventories of possessions, it became clear that ownership of such gold jewellery had declined sharply. People admitted that much of the gold had been sold off to pay for children's education, funerals and other necessities. Thus the decline in the use of jewellery in the villages reflects the rapid impoverishment of those who remain there. The gold has migrated with the rich to Pokhara and other towns, where elegantly dressed and heavily ornamented Gurung ladies are more common.

26. In Mohoriya itself, as well as in other villages, there are some very old round houses (cf. Macfarlane, 1976, diagram p. 98). But this may be a style influenced by the round houses often built by Brahmins and Chetris. It is probable that the earliest Gurung houses were rectangular. Lt. I.B.Gurung told us that the ruins of the houses at *Kohla* (the village from which the Gurungs are said to have descended) are rectangular. (See the more recent description of Gurung architecture given in Blair, 1983).

27. Pignède states that the wages for a day's work varied between one and a half and three rupees a day plus food. Ten years later in Thak there had been a slight increase, to three and a half rupees a day plus food. At that time a chicken cost about eight rupees. Given the value of the food given to the labourer as part of the wage (worth about three and a half rupees), the wage was just under the equivalent of a chicken or of fourteen eggs.

Since then there has been a huge fall in real wages in the Hills. For instance, Seddon (*Poverty*, p.115), estimates the rice equivalent of wage rates fell in three hill districts in the range from 23% to 57% during the years 1968-69 to 1976-7. It seems that this trend has continued and real wages have continued to fall steadily.

In 1990 in Thak the ordinary wage rate for unskilled labour was fifteen rupees a day plus two meals. This is equivalent to about thirty-five rupees in money. A chicken was between 80 and 100 rupees. Thus it would take two to three days to earn the equivalent of a chicken. We have calculated that the real returns on a day's work in the fields in 1990 was only fifteen to twenty rupees a day, even lower than that for a casual labourer.

An approximate halving of the returns on labour during the last thirty years is one of the root causes of the high level of out-migration and growing poverty of the hill Gurungs.

28. By 1990, the price of a tree (the tax to be paid to the government) has risen in Mohoriya from five rupees in 1958 to some fifty to sixty rupees for a small tree, and two to three hundred for a large one. Taking a middling figure, this is an increase of thirty-fold, as compared to a five-fold increase in wages.

29. The main change in housing since Pignède's time has been the introduction of corrugated iron. In some Gurung villages, Siklis for instance, where people previously used thatch because no slate was available, almost all now have houses with corrugated iron roofs. In others, such as Thak, Ghandrung or Mohoriya, where slate is more plentiful, only a few have iron roofs.

30. Gurungs no longer keep their fires alight all the time. Shortage of firewood has made this an extravagance.

31. Perhaps because he was only present during the summer, when firewood is not collected, Pignède does not describe this very important activity. Its importance arises partly out of the large amount of time and energy spent on it, partly because one of the pressures of population on resources is mediated through the cutting down of wood. The methods are summarised in Macfarlane, 1976, p. 134. "There are two major methods of collecting firewood. During the months from November until June, people go up to the forest day by day and cut small branches and trees, seldom more than 6 inches in diameter. This is done by people of almost any age and either sex. During the monsoon, however, the forest abounds with leeches and the wood is wet, also there

is more work to be done in the fields. So people lay in a large store of wood, often between forty and seventy bundles. This is cut by teams of men, who axe down huge trees. They then split up the wood with axes, leave it to dry for a month or two; then with the assistance of women, they carry it down in teams. "

Elsewhere it is stated that "The average weight of a load of wood as carried by the Gurungs is about 30 kg. The bundle is about 3 ft. in length and one and a half feet in diameter, consisting of logs or sticks tied together." (Macfarlane, 1976, p. 42). This constitutes roughly 37 cubic feet per individual per annum, or 120 bundles of wood per household per year. It typically takes between one and a half and three hours to walk up to the area where the wood is cut, and three or four hours to cut it. Thus it would take half the day, and much effort, to fetch a load of wood. In general, people are well aware of the need to conserve trees and try to collect dead wood. Some re-afforestation schemes have been started in selected village, but it is not certain how far these are succeeding given the difficulty of protecting the young trees against animals.

32. Sugar is now much more widely consumed than in Pignede's time. One moderately wealthy family in Thak in 1987, for instance, estimated that they would buy about 3 kg. of sugar a month, at 16 rs. per kg., giving an annual expenditure of 576 rs. Most families would buy much less, but most would buy some.

33. Pignède does not describe household furniture and utensils in any detail, merely referring to a few of the items in passing. Some 7 sleeping/sitting items, 14 cooking/eating utensils, 9 carriage/storing items, 8 miscellaneous items, and 11 luxury items are listed, with their Gurung or Nepali name and cost in 1969, in Macfarlane, 1976, pp. 103-6.

34. Alongside the older organic materials a new, inorganic one, plastic, has made rapid headway in the hill villages. Plastic bags, buckets and pipes are found in even the most remote villages and have substantially replaced the old containers made of wood and metal.

35. In Mohoriya in 1990 there were said to be hardly any wood and silver drinking pots in the village. They had already largely disappeared in Thak by 1969.

36. As the hill villagers have become poorer, so their diet has declined in quality. Already by 1969 I wrote that "there are considerable reasons for believing that the amount of meat eaten per person is decreasing fairly rapidly year by year, and the same is true of milk." (Macfarlane, 1976, pp.168-9). At that time an average family would eat meat eight to ten times a month. By 1990 there had been a 75% drop in meat consumption in Thak village, with meat only being eaten two or three times a month - a drop from one ounce a day on average to a quarter of an ounce. In Mohoriya in 1990 we were told that meat would only be eaten once or twice a month.

In 1969 I estimated that in an average family, each adult-equivalent would consume a pint of milk a day. Again the situation has declined seriously in the last twenty years. Milk is now a luxury and probably much less than a quarter of this amount is drunk. Thus, perhaps for the first time in their shepherding history, the village Gurungs are suffering from protein deficiencies as their herds decline and the cost of meat and milk makes such protein foods prohibitively expensive for them.

37. During the last few years the pounding and grinding of grains has been greatly eased by the introduction of diesel mills, alongside the older water mills and rice-pounders. There is one of these in Mohoriya and one about half an hour's walk from the main village of Thak. The usual charge is around one thirtieth of the milled grain, but the time and effort required is so dramatically reduced that most families take their grain to be husked or ground at the "machine". We were told in Mohoriya that the traditional rice pounder (*kuni*) and the quern were only used in emergencies, when people had run out, or the machine was short of fuel.

38. Although informants in 1990 claimed that most households in Mohoriya still weave, they admitted that the range of things woven had been much reduced. Only one or two houses still wove the rugs and capes which had previously been made in large quantities and sold

outside the village. Only the man's *rhaṅ* was still being made in a general way. In Thak, whereas in 1970 at least a third of the households were still weaving, by 1990 only two or three women were still said to weave.

39. One significant omission from Pignède's work is any mention of old weapons apart from bows and arrows. Since these are not used nowadays, it is easy to be unaware of them, but a few houses in both Thak and Mohoriya have an assortment of old weapons regarded as heirlooms. Many others have been sold off to curio hunters. Weapons in the past included long, curved, swords (*tarawa*), shields (*dala*), spears (*bala*), and protective wristlets (*togura*), as well as bows and arrows. The general impression one gets from early histories and older informants is that until the unification of Nepal in the 1770's by Prithvi Narayan Shah, the Gurungs, like other hill tribes, were divided into warring princedoms, each with its small Rajah or King, fortress and troops. There was constant war and feuding. The transformation to an almost entirely pacific and weaponless society in just over two hundred years is remarkable. Only in their martial prowess in foreign armies do the Gurungs maintain this war-like tradition.

40. A declining number of people in the villages still use the kind of herbal medicines described by Pignède. This is due in part to the growing use of western medicines. However, despite a massive rural health programme, with a vast amount of foreign aid money, the effects have not been as dramatic as one might have expected.

For instance, in Mohoriya, there was a small dispensary in 1958. By 1969 this had by then been taken over by the Nepalese Government. There was a health assistant, but very little medicine. The situation seems little changed in 1990, except that there are now three workers, two of them rural health workers and one a *peon* (general servant).

We were told that for a time there had been a nurse, but the money to pay her had run out. Women in difficult labour or other serious cases still have to be carried for two days on a porter's back to a hospital, as they have been forced to do for the last forty years. There is little medicine available.

These impressions are similar to those in Thak, where villagers who go to the health post in the neighbouring village usually find that

either there is no-one present (despite a recently increased staff of over ten people) or there is no medicine. Most of those who have serious illnesses go to Pokhara. Unfortunately, they do not always receive adequate treatment there either, often preferring the private help in medical shops (provided by hospital consultants in their "spare" time) to that provided by the one government hospital.

Although infant and child mortality has been considerably reduced, the amount of minor and avoidable illness is still very high. An account of such illness and the cures which are used, which is based on work in 1969 but is still broadly applicable, is given in Macfarlane, 1981.

41. Macfarlane, 1976, pp.131-3, gives an account of other crops, "since Pignède devoted less attention to minor crops than he did to the cultivation of rice, maize, and millet."

"The Gurungs in Thak plant a number of crops in among the rice, or on the embankments of the rice terraces. The principal of these are called *masa* and *masyan*, varieties of lentils....likewise planted in among other crops, usually among the maize, but also among rice, are *kwoia* or soya beans. Like *masa* this is of great importance nutritionally...In among the millet is planted a crop called *toro* (a type of grain)...On steep slopes or on high clearings in the forest are grown *alu* (potatoes) and *toyo* (yams)...In a small, fenced-off, vegetable garden near the house most families grow a selection of vegetables including tomatoes, kidney beans, sweet potatoes, chilies, spinach, peas, radish and a number of others."

42. The *nogar* organisation is still active in most Gurung villages, for instance, for communal work in preparing land, weeding and harvesting. In Thak a distinction was made between the *nogar* and the *gola* which was a communal work group which worked for payment on various people's fields, and used the money to hold a large picnic at which a buffalo was sacrificed at the end of the season. By 1987 the latter had disappeared, alongside the structured youth groups upon which it was based.

43. Potatoes are still grown in large quantities in a number of Gurung villages, including Mohoriya, where we were told that all the

families grew potatoes. The village still sells some of the crop. One informant estimated that about 50-60 *muri* of potatoes a year were sold. The cost of potatoes has increased from one rupee per *pathi* in Pignède's time to twenty-five rupees per *pathi* in 1990. However, other villages, such as Thak, now grow fewer potatoes than they did twenty years ago. At that time less than half the households grew potatoes; now only a handful of families do so. They can be bought cheaply in Pokhara or from itinerant salesmen in the village.

44. It is still the case that most Gurungs neither rear nor eat pigs. But Gurungs in the army are happy to eat pig and some Gurungs in Pokhara not only eat pig, but also rear them. What Gurungs do not like are the black pigs kept by Blacksmiths and Tailors.

45. Pignède's account of the buffalo tends to underplay its importance in the economy of many Gurung villages. Furthermore, his description of letting the buffaloes roam free near the village only applies to certain villages. In many of those we have visited, the buffaloes are stalled next to the house and fed on leaves and grass brought from the forest. As described in Macfarlane, 1976, p. 134, "collecting fodder for stalled animals is the most time-consuming of all livestock tasks. Most households keep one female buffalo and a calf stalled in the village, to provide milk and manure. This buffalo and calf seem to consume as much as a girl of about 14 can cut and bring in a day, as much as would take an adult half a normal working day to cut and fetch."

It was calculated that buffaloes consumed some 731,460 kg. of fodder per year in the sample hundred households of Thak. Along with other livestock, this put an even greater strain on the forest than wood cutting. Between 1970 and 1990, the number of buffaloes in Thak decreased by more than a half; thus the pressure and the huge amount of labour invested in buffalo fodder collecting has decreased. But so has the meat, milk and manure which they once provided in abundance.

46. If a village has a flock of sheep and needs the use of the upland pasture belonging to another village, it has to pay a fee either in cash, or by providing animals to be used in the worship of local deities. For sacrificial purposes, the animal must be in near perfect condition. Thus the rearing of animals is not just for milk, manure, meat and wool,

but for worship as well. Sheep, goats and chicken are the animals most often used, for instance, in the funeral ceremony, the *pae*, or when a new house is ready for occupation. [I.B.G.]

47. Pignède's use of the phrase "closed economic unit" was misleading in 1958 for, as he shows, Gurung villages had for a century been heavily dependent on income from migratory labour, particularly in the army. What he probably meant was that little surplus was sold from the village and few necessities were bought from outside.

Since Pignède wrote, the dependence on the outer world has increased very considerably. Firstly, the number of those who are forced to seek work far away from the village has grown. Secondly, the amount of necessities that have to be bought with cash from outside the village has increased. For instance, in Thak in 1969, families were spending over a thousand rupees a year on cash purchases outside the village (the detailed figures are in Macfarlane, 1976, p.178). Twenty years later, the average expenditure of similar level houses for the same items is about five times this amount, a slight increase given the rise in prices in the intervening period.

There have, however, been two items which were insignificant in 1969 for most people, but now require a very large increase in expenditure. One is education [see APPENDIX A], the other is rice. Elsewhere we describe how in the last twenty years Gurung villages have turned from being rice surplus to rice deficit communities. There is now a very substantial short-fall and most families have to spend more than a thousand rupees a year just buying rice. (Cf. Macfarlane, 1990, pp. 34-5.)

48. For an extended analysis of Gurung budgeting ten years after Pignède, see Macfarlane, 1976, Chapter 8.

49. Regarding the pay scales for Gurkha soldiers, it is arguable as to whether they are well paid. The British Gurkha soldier is on a pay scale which is similar to that of the Indian Army. This is considerably less than a British soldier earns. [C.B.G.]

50. For loan pledges, not only are lands, jewels or goods pledged, but even sons or daughters, or the man himself. The interest

includes not just 10-15%, but the borrower should pay about one tenth of the amount at the time of borrowing, he would also have to give three days labour per year. [I.B.G.]

51. Pignède suspected that British Gurkha soldiers borrowed the *dhakuri* (*dukuri*) system from the Chinese in Hongkong and Singapore. However, long before this the Gurungs used to play *dhakuri* for grain. Gradually money was substituted for grain. From the 1930's money became increasingly important in the villages. The *dhakuri* system spread down into towns, like Pokhara, from the mid-fifties. [C.B.G.].

Pignède's account can be supplemented by the fuller description and analysis in Messerschmidt 1978. As Messerschmidt shows, it has now spread widely through Nepal and northern India. *Dhakuri* is still played extensively in Gurung villages, for small and large sums.

52. Enquiries in Mohoriya suggest that lending and borrowing is still widespread and people still lend money to people in Birethãti and other towns. A major change is that whereas in 1958, and for up to fifteen years afterwards, rich retired Gurungs would return to the villages and lend their accumulated cash to poorer villagers or to people in the bazaar towns, this source of relatively easy credit has largely dried up. Most wealthy Gurungs move or retire to India or Nepalese towns where they invest their money in large houses, in the expensive education of their children, or in starting a business. Whatever is left tends to be put in a bank.

It is thus increasingly difficult for villagers to raise loans for the many emergencies that occur: the marriage of a daughter, the replacement of an animal, the repair of a house, the celebration of a *pae*. There do not appear to be professional money-lenders in the village and the interest rates are modest (about 10% p.a.) by South Asian standards. It is just that there is a decreasing amount of money available.

53. With the decrease in the use of their professional services as blacksmiths and tailors, one would have expected the respective position of the service castes to have been weakened and the traditional payments to them to have declined or disappeared (as predicted in Macfarlane, 1976, p. 155). On the other hand, with the outflow of Gurungs, there has been a continuing labour shortage in some Gurung villages and the

service castes are employed more and more as labourers and share-croppers. It is thus interesting to know what has happened to the traditional payments which in Mohoriya in 1958 were one to six *pathi* of grain per year from a Gurung client family, and in Thak in 1969 (Macfarlane, 1976, p. 154), between three and seven *pathi* of grain.

On the surface, the amount does not seem to have changed greatly. In Mohoriya in 1990 we were told that blacksmiths would be given about four *pathi* of millet, two *pathi* of rice, and six to seven *pathi* of maize by their patrons. Blacksmiths still make agricultural implements and hence are useful. Tailors are only paid for their particular services, which are not in great demand. The same sort of quantities are paid to a blacksmith in Thak.

54. Even in the years between 1958 and 1969 the use of cash and the acceptance of paper money had greatly increased. By 1990 metal coins had almost disappeared and paper money is used in most contexts. We are dealing with highly monetised village economies and, of course, the Gurungs in Pokhara are totally absorbed into a monetary economy.

55. The salt expeditions which Pignède described came to a sudden halt when the Tibetan border was closed to trade in 1959. After that, salt was brought from India through the bazaar towns such as Pokhara. The Indian salt is cheaper and among its other effects it has reduced the widespread goitres which used to afflict the Gurungs because Tibetan salt was deficient in iodine.

56. For further clarification on the registration of land:

a. *Hal* - Plot of land registered in the Government office since long ago.

b. *Halkodale* - Lands made available for cultivation and registered at a later period.

c. *Pate* - Land made available for landless villagers in a later period.

d. *Phhatke kodale* - Lands first cultivated by villagers without the authority of the headman. Later registered by him at the Government office and made taxable.

e. *Kodale* - Land made available to landless villagers and made taxable in a later period. Land tax nominal.

These names were used for land during the period of Rana rule. They have since been categorised as follows:

a. *Abal* - Best land.
b. *Sim* - Very good, fertile land.
c. *Doyem* - Good, medium fertile land.
d. *Char* - Fair, less fertile land.
[C.B.G.]

57. As I commented (Macfarlane, 1976, p.86), "by the time of [Pignède's] visit to Mohoriya there was clearly little unused, but potentially cultivable, land still available. I was told that in the eleven years since Pignède's visit, approximately 12 *ropani* of rice land had been brought into cultivation...I was told that there was possibly another 5 *ropani* or so of land that could be converted into rice fields."

When we visited Mohoriya in 1990, we were told that no new land had been opened up in the previous ten years. Rather than expanding the area of cultivated land, there has been a significant contraction. Now when one travels through many Gurung villages one notes a number of terraces which have been abandoned and gone to scrub (*banja*). This is particularly the case in Mohoriya. If we consider Pignède's map of land usage in 1958 (Fig. 12) the following fields have now been abandoned, with the approximate date of abandonment.

Field name	approx. date abandoned
selece	1973
cãhpo	1975
ukhrani	1965
poloce	1960
darolokyo	1960
khore (3 pieces)	1975

The desertion of the fields began soon after Pignède's visit. In Thak several areas further away from the village have been abandoned. We were told that the reason was usually that a man, often a retired soldier, would move to Pokhara and be unable to find share-croppers for his land. The returns on labour in terms of the cash value of crops is so low that it is hardly worth farming the land, especially poorer land. The villages nearer to Pokhara and other towns are particularly badly affected.

58. Informants in Mohoriya in 1990 said that there was still not a great deal of land-selling, but if people went to Pokhara, then they might sell their land. Our impression is that there has been an active land market in many Gurung villages for the last forty or fifty years at least, as returned soldiers invested their earnings in land. The process has probably not increased much recently, since fewer soldiers return to the village.

59. Since the hills are primarily agricultural, the price of land is a crucial variable. Thirty-two years later, we were given the following prices for land in Mohoriya:

- for land that would produce one *muri* of rice in the best land, 3,000 to 4,000 rupees;
- for one *muri* of rice in less good land, 2,000 to 3,000 rupees;
- for land producing one *muri* of maize, 1,750 to 2,000 rupees.

This indicates a ten-fold increase in the price of land, which is roughly in line with the increase in wages, but well below the rise in other prices - for instance of wood or consumer goods. This is broadly in line with figures which were obtained over a twenty-year period in Thak.

This suggests that while land prices rose in line with, or even faster, than general prices until the early 1970's, they have lagged behind since then. As foreign earnings were no longer being invested in the villages, land prices stagnated. The rapid flow of money went into the towns where prices have rocketed. For instance, in Pokhara, the value of a piece of land bought in 1972 upon which a house was built, has increased over one hundred-fold in the last eighteen years. For those with money to spare, investment in Pokhara brings a ten-fold better return than investment in the village. With such a difference, it is not surprising that those with money invest in the towns.

60. While sharecropping (called *ade lava*, "half doing") has probably always been present in Gurung villages, it has undoubtedly increased very considerably during the last fifteen years. I did not notice a great deal of sharecropping in 1969, but in 1990 very many families were letting out their land to sharecroppers or acting as sharecroppers. The usual rate was half of the crop to each party. The movement of

wealthier Gurungs out of the village has been a major reason for this. Often they are reluctant to sell the land and prefer to obtain a half-share.

It is often said, and may well be true, that sharecroppers are less careful farmers than owners. Given the very low returns on a day's agricultural work, namely about fifteen to twenty rupees worth of grain, on average, the returns for a sharecropper, if only half of this, hardly makes it worth the effort except for the most desperate. Much of the sharecropping is thus done by Blacksmiths, Tailors and very poor Gurungs and it is increasingly difficult for absentee Gurungs to find people willing to take this land as share-croppers. (See also Strickland, 1984, p. 232).

61. Pignède describes *lama* as a clan of the Plih-gi. In fact there is no *lama* clan in the Gurung community. Any person from any clan who learns the science of the Lama can be called "Lama". Even a Brahmin can be called "Lama" if he has learned the ritual texts and performs as a Lama.

The Lamichhane clan of Ghandrung started to learn Lamaism three generations ago. The first time that the word Lama was used was in the *Vamsavali* constructed by Bhoj Raj (cf. Legend II, pp. 160-162).

As far as the Plih-gi clan is concerned, the following are the principal clans given in both Gurung and Nepali versions:

GURUNG	NEPALI
Ghale	Ghale
Kon	Ghotane
Plon	Lamichhane
Puinmai	Panki Lama

[C.B.G.]

62. I have heard of neither *tu-gi* nor *pu-gi*. There are in fact three types of *kon* (more correctly *kon-mai*):

a. *migi konmai* - The *kon* of Mohoriya whom Pignède studied.

b. *kamche konmai* - Found in Ghandrung and Sabet, a village south of Dangsing.

c. *konmai*.

All of them belong to one clan, the Kon clan. It is believed that they descended from a common ancestor wherever they come from. They call each other "cousin", and do not marry within the clan. [C.B.G.]

63. As noted previously, there is no such thing as a *lama* clan, thus Pignède's conclusions are erroneous. [C.B.G.]

64. Pignède strains the evidence to connect Gurung words with Tibetan. The languages of a number of the ethnic groups of Nepal, the Newars, Tamangs, Magars, Rais and Limbus, are all Tibeto-Burman, so it is likely that there are similar words in all these languages, not just Gurung. [C.B.G.]

65. Pignede's table should be revised, not as "lords" and "priests" but as "principal clans"·

ghale	*paen (panki lama)*
ghotane	*lamichhane*

The sub-lineages of the *ghotane* (or *kon-mai*) are given in note 62. above. Those of the *lamichanne* (or *plon*) are:

rhan-mai
lem-mai
tud-mai [G.B.G.]

66. Pignède notes the existence of a clan called *paī*. This must be a reference to *paen* (see previous note), and *lem*, a reference to a sub-lineage of the *plon*. [C.B.G.]

67. In the marriage rules drawn by Pignède (fig. 16), *lama* should read *paen*. [C.B.G.]

As was noted by Pignède, by Macfarlane (1976, p. 17) and Messerschmidt (1976, p. 54), the rules are not strictly observed; for instance any of the clans may marry each other.

68. Pignede suggests that Solahjat used to act as porters for the Carjat. There is no evidence of any hard and fast rule or socially binding custom that meant that the Ku-gi should carry for the Plih-gi. Economic factors alone would drive them to do so.

For instance, the Kon family of Mohoriya were frequent travellers to Pokhara, Kathmandu and Bhairuwa. They engaged a Gharti and Brahmins as porters. In lieu of part-payment, they provided free land to two Brahmin families. The Gharti was a professional porter. Whenever a member of the Kon family travelled, a man from one of these three families carried his load. Wages were paid them, and they were occasionally given clothing, shoes, sweaters, etc. [C.B.G.]

69. In 1958, as Pignède describes, there was a form of parliamentary monarchy. In 196O, King Mahendra decided that the party system would not work in Nepal and "declared all parties illegal, closed down the parliament, arrested and imprisoned all cabinet members then in Kathmandu, and took the government into his own hands" (Bista, 1991). The constitution was amended in 1962 and the first national Panchayat was set up. In 1980 there was a referendum to decide whether the country should continue with a partyless Panchayat system, and this was endorsed by a smallish majority. The King retained the ultimate power, appointing and dismissing ministers. In 1990 there was a popular rebellion and a new constitutional arrangement, with political parties contesting democratic elections held in 1991.

70. Pignède writes that the *kon* were the administrators of the *ghale* kings. As there seems to have been a continuous tussle between them (cf. Legends II and III, pp. 160-164), it is difficult to see how far the *ghale* kings could trust the *kon* as their administrators.

Though the *ghale* dynasty were rulers in the Lamjung area, I have found no reference to *ghale* kings in other parts of the Gurung country.[6] There is some evidence that *kon* and *plon* were rulers in parts other than Lamjung. [C.B.G.]

71. By 1990 this group's holdings were in decline. Although there were 16 separate dwellings occupied by members of the group, only four of these were headed by men of the sixth generation, the rest were still occupied by the men who had been noted by Pignède, or by

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[6] According to Bhovar Tamu, there were *ghale* kings at Kohla, Kaskikot and Arghou, etc. within the Kaski district.

their widows. Many of the sons are either soldiers or civilian workers abroad, but significantly, the sons' wives have settled in Pokhara or elsewhere, and the families are unlikely to return to Mohoriya to live. As this group represents the wealthiest families, the large landowners who have most to lose by leaving, this drift away from the village indicates a general trend which may herald the gradual depopulation of Mohoriya.

72. This is now not generally the case. A few people do know about their ancestors to this depth, but in Thak this is exceptional. The average knowledge is probably about three generations, in other words up to great-grandparents, and even this far is often not known.

73. Pignède's description of the *krōh* is a little muddled. It was an hereditary role that passed between close kin, an honorary position for which no payment was made by the Government. Thus, the Bara-Hakim was in no position to dismiss a *krōh*. I know of no case of this having happened.

The story told by Pignède about the dispute between the *krōh* of Dangsing and Mohoriya is a fabrication. It was not a case of bad faith or incapacity. The Bara-Hakim did not dismiss anyone. The *krōh* of Mohoriya transferred the post to his cousin who was from Dangsing, without the permission of his own *kon* clan. This was considered a disgrace by the *kon* family of Mohoriya, and a complaint was lodged with the Bara Hakim. In the meantime, the old *krōh* died, and the Bara-Hakim returned the hereditary right to the *kon* clan of Mohoriya. [C.B.G.]

74. Pignède's assertion that the Katwal was normally chosen from amongst the *damai* is not correct. The *krōh* could appoint anyone who had a good voice and the intelligence to convey information correctly. In 1958, the Katwal of Ghandrung was a Gurung. [C.B.G.]

75. Contact with the Government has obviously increased in various ways. More people in the village are employed in minor capacities by the Government, and the school and previous Panchayat organisation provide some links. Indirectly, the radio gives information about national events. There is still, however, a great political distance between the centre and the villages.

76. Theft is still uncommon, as are other serious crimes. For instance, we asked the Pradhan Pancha of the large village of Siklis (total population of 2,048 in 1990) about crimes. He said that in the last ten years only two or three people had been taken off for questioning by the police. A few very minor cases were tried informally in the village. He had never heard of any cases of murder or rape in the Siklis region. During the previous year there had been two cases of fighting, arising from drink. He knew of no cases of wife-beating. Similarly in Thak, crime of any kind is practically unknown. In neither village is there a policeman. The introduction of police into the large village of Ghandrung is widely regarded by the inhabitants as unnecessary and provocative. Villages police themselves.

77. The infrequency of murder is well illustrated by this exceptional case. When travelling through Gurung villages in Lamjung in 1987, we mentioned a future trip to Mohoriya. Several people warned us not to visit it because it was very dangerous, a political hot-bed where murders were frequent. Only later did we discover that they were referring to this one incident almost forty years before, the horror of which was still felt.

78. The account of this dispute given by Pignède is wrong. There was a case, but the *krōh* of Mohoriya won it. He was not dismissed. [C.B.G.]

79. Women work, even carrying heavy loads, right up until the moment of birth.

80. Pignède believed that in cases of pre-marital sexual intercourse, there would be no condemnation of the boy, but the girl would be reprimanded by her parents. As Macfarlane, 1976, p. 117, remarks, "Such a rigid *double standard* does not seem to have been held in Thak, at least in theory, and in cases where intercourse led to pregnancy...Several informants said that the man was as much to blame as the girl."

81. Nowadays, Nepalo-Indian style dancing, with boys and girls either dancing separately or together, is the norm.

82. For an extended analysis of population pressure on resources among the Gurungs up to 1970, see Macfarlane, 1976 and more recently Strickland, 1984 and Macfarlane, 1990. There is no doubt that mounting pressure has driven people out, but equally important are the relatively greater amounts people can earn through migratory labour. In hill Brahmin villages, for instance, much higher densities are maintained by combining a lower standard of living with very intensive (double-cropping) agriculture. This is an alternative strategy to that of the Gurungs.

83. As Pignède states, the Gurungs are far from endogamous. A number of marriages between Gurungs, and Tamangs and Magars have occurred in Thak. However, no cases of Gurung marriages with Blacksmiths or Tailors are recorded there.

84. Pignède's remark that Gurungs are not happy about the exchange of sisters is probably inaccurate. It is true that cases are infrequent, though we have heard of some. When we asked about this in Mohoriya in 1990 we were told that this was a good kind of marriage, which people approved of.

85. Pignède describes the system as if it is an asymmetrical one, with a marked preference for marriage with a mother's brother's daughter (matrilateral cross-cousin marriage). This would link it to the large group of societies in North India, Assam and elsewhere, which have this preferential marriage pattern.

As argued in Macfarlane, 1976, p.19 "there is considerable evidence, however, that both in theory and in practice the system is more symmetrical than he suggests with marriages occurring with father's sister's children just as often and with a mixture of symmetry and asymmetry in the kinship terminology. For instance, in a census for Thak in 1969, 8 marriages with father's sister's daughter and only 3 with mother's brother's daughter were recorded. Informants were adamant that both type of marriage were equally desired."

The Glovers (cf. Glover and Gurung, 1977, p. 303) also report that "cross cousin marriages are preferred and, in Ghachok area at least, there is no expressed preference as to whether the mate is chosen through the maternal or the paternal link."

When we asked about this in Mohoriya in 1990, people said that both types of marriage were equally desirable and, they thought, equally frequent. Furthermore, the kinship terminology seems to be consistent with this equal preference. There is a strong distinction made between the terms for parallel cousins, who are addressed and referred to in terms used for brothers and sisters, and cross-cousins, who are referred to with special terms. These terms are the same for matrilateral and patrilateral cross cousins *ṅohlõ* (M) and *ṅohlon-śyo* (F) (cf. p. 294).

86. As analysed in Macfarlane, 1976, p. 226, Pignède's findings are not universally applicable. In Thak, for instance, a number of women have not married and there is no particular surprise or horror at this; "marriage does not appear to be an important turning point, economically, ritually or socially. A person is not looked on as incomplete if he or she has no spouse or children. Unmarried girls in Thak are as confident and respected as married ones." Almost a third of the girls aged between 26-4O in 1970 were unmarried.

87. There is a detailed discussion of age at first marriage among the Gurungs in Macfarlane, 1976, pp.219-220. This supports Pignède's general impression that Gurungs marry from 17 years upwards, though it is suggested that a greater number marry at a younger age than Pignède stated.

88. Pignède's description of the marriage ceremony only covers parts of the ritual. A fuller account is given in Messerschmidt, 1976, pp.57-61.

89. Marriages are now registered officially, as are births and deaths.

90. One of the most important changes since Pignède wrote is in the behaviour of retired soldiers. Up to about 1975 almost all soldiers retired to the villages where their savings and pensions enriched the village economy. Increasingly after that date, and almost universally in the 1980's, ex-servicemen retire to Pokhara or other towns. As one informant put it, the characteristic pattern is as follows: the soldier returns to the village on the first leave and spends some money there; on

the second leave he marries; on the third he buys a little land in the town; on the fourth he buys further land; on the fifth and subsequent leaves he builds his town house. From the fourth leave onwards he starts to educate his children in the expensive town schools. Only occasionally does he visit his natal village, spending almost none of his relatively considerable fortune there. In 1969 there were no ex-servicemen's households in Pokhara from the central households in Thak; by 1987 there were over twenty, as well as an equal number of other families who had migrated down from the village.

91. A more detailed account of the ceremony is given in Messerschmidt, 1976, pp. 46-9. Pignède's account is rather strange since all those we have talked to were sure that ritual brotherhood (*nyela lava* gur.) could only exist between people from groups who should not intermarry. For instance, Gurungs could make such relations with Magars, Tamangs, Tailors, Blacksmiths and others. Members of the Carjat and Solahjat can form such a relationship with each other. But they were adamant that such a relationship was impossible within the Carjat or the Solahjat. It is possible that Mohoriya was different, but more likely that Pignède was talking of something else.

92. Soon after Pignède left, the Terai in the south of Nepal was opened up for settlement, due to the eradication of malaria. A number of families left Mohoriya for Chitwan as a result.

By 1990, many young men from Thak were working in India, mainly in Bombay and Delhi, or Saudi Arabia (cf. Macfarlane, 1990, p. 36-7). Significantly, a large number of these were Carjat.

93. Pignède's diagram is slightly modified in Macfarlane, 1976, p. 113, where it is suggested that in Thak even his "flexible situation is too rigid....even supposedly female activities such as cooking, or carrying water, may be done by men, though only in a minority of cases. The only male activities never undertaken by women in Thak were ploughing and basketwork, while men did everything performed by women except weaving and spinning." Even this is too absolute, as we recently saw an elderly woman making bamboo fencing, which verges on basketwork. Informants thought that while ploughing and weaving would

not be approved of, "would not do" (*a-ta*, gur.), the reason for not making baskets was lack of skill.

94. *Ro* also means 'sleep', so *ro-dhī* could simply mean 'sleeping house'. However, it is not merely for sleeping, singing or gossiping. The girls can organise a work force, a dance, or a trip to some religious shrine like that at Dudh Pokhari near Lamjung Himal (18,000 ft.). The walk might take them through many villages, round Annapurna Himal, Manang, Muktinath, and back through Pokhara. On their way they would dance in villages to raise money to meet the expenses of their journey. They would carry all their provisions and cooking utensils with them. [I.B.G.]

The *ro-dhī* has been declining fast since Pignède wrote and is now only found in its full form in some of the more remote villages in Lamjung. A detailed analysis of this variation on the common south and south-east Asian communal dormitory system, found for instance among the Nagas and the Muria of Andhra Pradesh, is given in Andors, 1971, 1976.

95. Pignède states quite categorically that male bastards inherit a full share of goods and lands from their putative fathers. This is certainly not the case in all Gurung villages. In Siklis and Thak in 1969, for instance, informants were adamant that illegitimate sons were not given a full share. The amount given depends on a number of factors, for instance, village pressure, or the decision of the father and a group of elders. However, they would inherit in preference to a father's brother if there were no legitimate son.

96. *tah* cannot be the son of the dead person. *tah* means 'friend'. He could be from the same lineage, but kin groups are often paired so that among the Song-gi, for example, Kepchaī have Lemme as *tah*.

The aim of *tah-kral la-ba* is to destroy the *mōh* (wandering spirits) and to clear the way to the land of the dead for the soul of the deceased. This take place in three stages. Firstly, by the *tah-kral* as described, then by the close kin - sons, brothers, fathers (real or classificatory), and lastly by the *a-śyō*. This ceremony differs slightly from place to place throughout Gurung country. [I.B.G.]

97. The making and decoration of the *a-lā* differs for the funeral and the *pae*. For the former, for instance, *chhyuta* (a plant) forms the main decoration, while for the latter, fruit, flowers, bottles of *pa*, etc. are added as well. [I.B.G.]

98. The selection of *moh* is not done by anybody but the *moh* themselves. The chief *moh* is the closest son-in-law of the deceased, the husband of his daughter (or of his eldest daughter if he had more than one). If he had no daughter or was unmarried, his eldest sister's husband is chief *moh*. If he had no sister, then the *moh* is selected from his father's brother's kin or even further kin. The *moh* who performs the ceremony can be a hired man, not close kin at all, but someone who knows the ceremony well. [I.B.G.]

99. *buwari*: elder brother calls younger brother's wife.

100. Kinship terms vary quite considerably between valleys and even villages in the same valley. For instance, mother's brother in Mohoriya is *mom*, while it is *mama* in Thak; father is *aba* in Thak and *pabu* further up the valley; oldest brother is *agi* in Thak and *ali* further up the valley. Pignède's list is not complete, for instance he does not have a term for husband's brother (*dewar*). Nor does he distinguish between terms of address and terms of reference; most of his terms seem to be those of reference. A further list of terms, from Ghachok village, north of Pokhara, has been collected (Glover et al., 1977, pp.303-6), which adds considerably to Pignède's list.

101. Milk is offered to *Namru*, but cow dung is only used for cleaning and purifying the altar. [C.B.G.]

102. While Pignède is right in saying that pucu usually belong to the *kromzē* and *lehṅai* clans, this is not always the case. The Thak pucu in 1969 was of the *bucha* clan and other clans such as *ngobje* may also be pucus. Pucus are almost always from the Solahjat (Ku-gi). It is debatable whether the drum rhythms distinguish the *kromzē* from the *lehṅai*. The pucu is both a priest (*khegi*) and curer (*paindi*).

The four kinds of pucu are more correctly:

karkola - pucu from the East
pron - pucu from the West
namatithu namth-haya - pucu from the North
chalden - pucu from the South

kromzē and *lehñai* pucus are of the *namatithu namth-haya* tradition (this group now includes pucus of the other clans). Their tradition acknowledges *Rinbyun Chyon* (the female pucu whom Pignède refers to as *Rhi-mai-cyō*), in deference to whom they wear the woman's *pro* as part of their custom and call on their "sisters" (*chomi rhimae*) to protect them during their most dangerous *teh*.

The pucu of the East, West and South are of the *mhyuonbyun* tradition. Their costume is different and they don't include *chomi rhimae* in their *teh*. [Y.T.]

103. As in most of Gurung territory, the number of active pucus is declining in the Modi valley. By 1990 the two families of pucu priests in Mohoriya had disappeared and there was no practising pucu in the village, nor had there been one for some twenty years, we were told. Pucus from other villages were brought down if needed, but people increasingly used either the health post or the lower caste *dhame*. Likewise in Thak, for the first time in recorded history, there is no pucu in the village; the last practising member of the pucu family joined his father in Pokhara in early 1990. The main reason for the decline seems to be financial. Pucu are generally paid in grain rather than cash, and this has not kept its value compared to other costs.

104. Although almost all pucu and klihbrī are male, the occasional one is female. The late chief klihbrī of Bhujung was a woman. The present chief pucu practising in Syanja district is a woman. The female principle in pucuism is strong (cf. the story of *Ri-mai-cyō*). Women continue to play a vital role as *chomi rhimai* by "protecting" their brothers (standing behind and holding certain objects over the pucu) during some of the most dangerous *teh*. [J.P.]

105. This statuette is definitely a cow. Gurungs would not worship a dog in a shrine. [C.B.G.]

106. Pignède interpreted the *koe* ceremony as a religious cult. In fact *koe* (*kot* nep.) simply means a fort. The *koe* is considered as the seat of power, so the ceremony is to commemorate the existence of the ancestral state. A male goat, male buffalo and a cock are sacrificed. It is believed that the red blood inspires and strengthens the soldiers to fight to defend the state. Hindus also celebrate this occasion in the worship of the goddess Bhagabati when large numbers of animals are sacrificed. [C.B.G.]

107. The construction of *mane* was begun about a generation ago in the Gurung country on the advice of Gurung lamas. One *mane* erected to the north of Mohoriya on the trail leading to Ghandrung was built in 1949 on the advice of a lama of Ghandrung. [C.B.G.]

108. Pignède's deductions about fish are supported by direct statements of informants in Thak. We were told that they used a fish which was "wet", as this would bring rain to the fields. In the month of Asuj, they would use a dried fish, to request the rains to stop.

109. In 1990 the village rituals were almost all still performed in Mohoriya apart from the *Rahni*.

The Glovers (cf. Glover et al, 1977, pp. 311-313), list thirteen "curative rituals" performed by lama, klihbrī, and pucu, and fourteen "village and household rituals". There may well be others. One not listed by either Pignède or the Glovers is the *Panca bholi* puja. This is done in Thak, but only irregularly, when there is an epidemic among animals. Another is the *Tusyu priba* which is done when hail falls for the first time in either winter or summer. The villagers do not go to the fields for the three days following the storm in the belief that, by so doing, no further hail-storms will occur. Some villages even keep a lama to prevent hail-storms, paying him in grain.

110. The description of the pucu and klihbrī and their rituals is one of the most important parts of Pignède's work. Not only is it the first full description of this very rich system, but it remains the fullest, despite the recent very interesting account by Mumford (1989). As Strickland (1987) wrote, it is "outstanding", an extraordinary achievement in the five months during which Pignède was present in Gurung territory. So

far as it goes, it is a very accurate and clear account. Necessarily, however, it is far from complete. Pignède describes probably less than a third of the mythical and ritual system of the pucus. A certain amount more has been published since Pignède wrote (Strickland 1987; Messerschmidt, 1976; Macfarlane 1981; Mumford 1989), but much more remains unpublished, both in thesis form (Strickland, 1982), and in the unpublished notes of Pignède himself.

111. Pignède's mention of a protective *mantra* (*ṅo* gur.) is one of the few references to a largely ignored but important part of the pucu's power. Every pucu has a store of *ṅo* which he uses to protect himself and attack evil spirits, witches and, occasionally, his enemies. The *ṅo* are learnt orally from the pucu's father or teacher, though there are also books of *ṅo*, which are kept secret. The magical words are a mixture of Hindi, Nepali, Tibetan and Gurung. Some are so powerful that they are not entrusted to a young pucu in case he uses them in anger against an enemy. In using these mantras the pucu uses the vast reservoir of magical spells upon which all the other priests, lama, brahmin, and klihbrī, also draw.

The protection of the pucu by a mantra also draws attention to another dimension which was understated by Pignède, this is the dangerous nature of the pucus work. A pucu friend told us that he was worried about doing some of the more dangerous rituals such as the *pih-ngeh-sheba* [see APPENDIX F] where he has to battle against witches. In a number of the rituals, such as the *mose ho-ba*, part of the ritual is a battle with evil spirits. At this point there is a very real danger that the pucu will lose and if he does, he will immediately become ill.

112. *Pae* conducted by pucu and klehbrī can be held any time, although the ideal is within nine days of *dukha nyhoba*. *Pae* conducted by lamas frequently take place within 49 days if funds permit. [Y.T.]

113. The *kh-hun* has special spiritual powers. Just as it protects people from the physical elements, so it protects the pucu from the forces of evil. Before starting any *tēh* the pucu says a mantra (*ṅo*) to the *kh-hun* after which it is imbued with spiritual power, and protects the pucu against evil spirits. When these spirits look at the *kh-hun* they see its many eyes and do not see the pucu. [Y.T.]

114. Some supplementary details missed by Pignède are given in Messerschmidt, 1976, pp. 84ff. Neither writer describes one of the central parts of the pucu-klihbrī *pae* which we have witnessed several times, where the klihbri dances in a "duel" with a relative of the dead person (the *moh*), who holds the bamboo tube enclosing a relic of the deceased (hair, bone, nails). The latter has to be "captured" by the klihbri, though this may be a variant on the *rhi thēb-ba* described by Pignède (p. 379).

115. Should be Aapthe-rhimarchhe. (See note 118.) [Y.T.]

116. Gods were not borrowed from Tibetan Buddhism. Bonism pre-dates Buddhism. [Y.T.]

117. All human life and matter are created in *Krō-nasa*. In the first stage of creation, life begins in seed-like form in *Krō-nasa*, and passes through the stages of *Si-nasa* and *T-hho-nasa*, before being born into *Sa-nasa*, (earth).

Si-nasa is not the land of the dead. Following death, the *plah* (soul) goes to *K-hhukli Mharson*, a place in the Himalayas whose exact location is unknown. During the *pae lava*, the *plah* is sent by the pucu and klihbri to *Injit-hhewa Chainiye Singa* which corresponds to heaven. The pucu who visited *Cō* from *Krō-nasa* was the god *Krō-lu*. [Y.T.]

118. Wainabarnaje, (more correctly Wuin Nōba K-hhyala) is the god of the centre of the world. Guru-rhimarche (Aapthe-rhimarcche) is the term used for ancestors. There is no relationship between them. [Y.T.]

119. Following the *pae* a person is reborn. The type of rebirth will depend on the quality of the life that he led. A bad person will come back as an animal, or be born a cripple, or into a very poor family. People are not reincarnated as specific individuals; a Gurung does not necessarily come back as a Gurung in the next life. [Y.T.]

120. Pignède several times states that the pucu does not have books. It is true that a legend describes how a pucu ancestor, defeated by the lama, burnt all his books, and that pucus are less dependent on

reading than brahmins or lamas. Theirs is mainly an oral tradition. But it would be wrong to conclude from the fact that they recite oral myths that they have no books. Both the pucus that we know well have numerous "books", thousands of pages, in the form of rolls, parchments, printed and unprinted works, containing *pe* (myths), astrological information, *ṅo* (mantras), *jantras* (charms), names of ancestors and other writings. It would be a long but rewarding task to decipher these works, which might reveal many rituals and myths no longer performed.

Taking just one of these books, belonging to the Thak pucu, as an example, it consists of 136 pages covering the following subjects: searching for lost goods; the *gra*; the *parga*; to discover when a person will return from abroad; suitable marriages; the *lho*; when a person will get better; when good to eat crops; meaning of the *pae*; what time to start the *pae*; what time one may travel in various directions; when to make the windows of a house; when to cut wood for building houses; where to build a house; the right day for a wedding; when to cut a child's hair; if one sees evil signs, how to interpret them; childbirth rituals; the significance of various times; unlucky months; how to foretell the future of a child; how to diagnose the causes of sickness.

121. In the Gurung country there are, in fact, two types of lama. Those generally found in the valleys of the Modi and Kali Gandhaki are influenced from Mustang, and their religion is strongly Buddhist with a little Bonism. Those in the Lamjung region and the Siklis valley are influenced from Manang (Nar), and their religion is more strongly Bon with little Buddhism. The lamas from Taprang, Siklis, Tangting and Yangjakot do have some myths in the Gurung language which the Mustang lamas do not. The rituals of the Nar lamas, klihbrī and pucu are similar.

The use of brahmin priests by the Gurungs is decreasing as they prefer to use the pucu or lama. The klihbrī are still in decline, possibly because they are only used for funerals. The pucus are more versatile as they specialise in curative and preventative rituals as well. Also, Gurungs are using both Tibetan and Tamang lamas as well, which they did not do twenty year's ago, a reflection of the increasing influence of Buddhism among the hill peoples. [I.B.G.]

FURTHER COMMENTS ON PIGNÈDE'S WORK AND THE SITUATION AMONG THE GURUNGS TODAY

APPENDIX A. EDUCATION

Pignède described the early days of the educational revolution that has swept Nepal in the last thirty-five years (for a good summary of events, see D.B.Bista, 1991, ch. 6). The school Pignède wrote about in Mohoriya is still there, but is much expanded. The school has seven classes, eight teachers and 18O students, about 100 of whom come from Mohoriya itself. After class seven, the children go to schools at about three hours walk away, where they can read to tenth class. This, in effect, means that children who wish to finish their schooling have to become boarders. This is expensive, both in the direct cost of boarding and tuition fees and uniform, and because the family is deprived of the young person's labour. The school uniform alone for a good village school may cost up to one thousand rupees a year, equivalent to thirty days labouring in the fields. Yet far more expensive is the other option, namely sending the children away for education in Pokhara or Kathmandu.

The provision of almost universal primary education in all villages is complemented by an apparently insatiable demand for education among almost all sectors of Nepalese society. There has been an explosion of private and state education, with hundreds of schools charging fees from a few rupees to thousands a month. To send an older child to a town school for one year, with board and tuition fees, will cost at least one thousand rupees a month. If we are aware that a day's work in the village as a labourer will only earn about thirty rupees, it is obvious that such education is well beyond the reach of ordinary villagers. Even a schoolmaster or shop-keeper, earning two or three thousand rupees a month, will have difficulty in affording such education. Yet the schools are full of students. Many returned soldiers invest more in their children's education than in their house and business. There are those who have gone to expensive English-medium schools in

the towns, and there are their country cousins, many of whom have to leave school after sixth or seventh class.

Other consequences arise from what is taught. There is a very heavy emphasis on the traditional literary subjects, in particular English. The schools are dedicated to producing clerks, desk bureaucrats. Much of the learning is by rote. There are token gestures towards more practical subjects such as domestic science or agriculture, but these are minimal. The result is that the child's education re-enforces the other pressures of town living to make it impossible for a child educated in this way ever to return successfully to the village. Not only does he or she not have the strength or the skills, but above all, there is no inclination. There is already very extensive unemployment, especially among those who have passed their School Leaving Certificate. Increasingly they find that there is no work in the tiny bureaucracy and merchant sector in Nepal's small towns. Thus they flow down and out to India, Arabia or anywhere where work beckons. "Education" is one of the most powerful forces changing Gurung society, producing an emphasis on the Nepali rather than the Gurung language, and on the international consumer values of western capitalism. It is difficult to know whether it makes people think, question, analyse, in the ways which educationalists hope.

The alienation created by the educational system is not helped by facilities provided for the children. Many of the village schools have a good teacher-student ratio (though the teachers are often home-sick Brahmins, who do not speak Gurung, know nothing about the local culture, and long to be posted to a town). But otherwise there is practically nothing; blackboards or other teaching aids are rare, the class-rooms are dark and have little furniture. The general atmosphere is one of good-natured chaos. All this contrasts with the expensive private schools with foreign tutors, good facilities and smart uniforms which are found in large towns.

The educational system tends to create a divided and alienated society. Yet no-one can see any alternative. People rightly perceive that if Nepal is to join the great world consumer society, to integrate itself with the international world of communications, business and bureaucracy, it cannot avoid education. Since everyone perceives this, a huge amount of Gurung and other resources are funnelled into the competitive spiral. Already an S.L.C. (School Leaving Certificate) pass is not enough. Now, even a B.A. is not a guarantee of a good job. The

rich have to push their children through an M.A. and perhaps even a Ph.D.

APPENDIX B. LANDSLIDES AND SOIL EROSION

Widespread concern has been expressed at the loss of land through landslides and soil erosion. It is thus worth noting more recent impressions from two Gurung villages.

In 1990 we asked how much land had been lost through landslides in Mohoriya during the previous ten years and were told that there had only been one serious landslide, which had swept away half of the rice in one field area (*āri*). One informant estimated that 80 *muri* of rice land and 100 *muri* of maize land had been lost in the last ten years, and this was confirmed by another informant who had himself lost land producing 20 *muri* of rice. This does not suggest that the rate of loss has increased.

In Thak in 1987 we asked about landslide losses. We were told that in about 1960 the river had swept away 620 *mla muri* of rice land. Apart from this, there had been no other major landslides causing substantial loss of rice land, except one in 1979 or 1980 when 27 *mla muri* worth of rice land was lost. Even this major loss was not, in fact, a landslide, but a large field swept away by the river which had been swollen by unusual rains.

These findings cast some doubts on Strickland's conclusion that "while one can not go so far as to declare that erosion is the only cause for the remarkably sharp declines in yields, it is almost certainly a principal one; and it has considerable social implications." (Strickland, 1984, p.218).

Strickland undertook his survey in 1980 in Thak and Mohoriya. He collected "villagers' estimates of the amounts of grain income lost for each field afflicted by landslide damage." He assumed that such losses occurred in 1980, while recognising that they might refer also to a year or two previously. From this he found the extraordinary figures that "in Mohoriya each household would on average expect to lose about 10 kg of unhusked rice per annum, while in Thak the figure rises to around 116 kg per household per annum." This discrepancy alone is peculiar, and might have alerted him to something suspect, particularly since the fields

in Mohoriya are clearly steeper and in a worse condition than those in Thak. But he nevertheless goes on to argue that "assuming such rates of loss to be constant over the preceding years since the earlier survey dates, these mean averages more than account for the recorded drop in yields." Unfortunately, the 1980 figure for Thak now looks entirely untypical and the whole calculation is open to doubt.

Probably equally if not more important as a cause of the decline of village agriculture are simple market forces. One of the most important reasons for the growing poverty of many hill villages lies in the effects of road building and the opening up of the Terai. It is often noted that cheap mass-produced goods from India have largely destroyed the small industries which once flourished in Nepal. The same has probably been happening in agriculture. Basically, it is at present much cheaper and more efficient to buy grain from the Terai and India. The effects of this can be seen in one simple equation. Given the labour input to produce a certain volume of grain on the terribly steep hillsides, and the low price of rice in the bazaar, the returns in 1990 on the back-breaking work of rice or maize production was something like 20 rs. per day for rice and 15 rs. per day for maize. If we compare this to the 30-50 rs. per day a person can earn as a porter or house-builder in the village, the 80-100 rs. per day a manual worker will earn in Pokhara, let alone the five to six hundred rupees per day a person will earn each day as a soldier in Brunei, we can see why many people lose heart. At this rate, it takes 25-40 days of back-breaking work to buy a pair of leather shoes which are a necessary part of high-school uniform; it takes two or three days work to earn the money to buy a chicken. Fifteen to twenty rupees a day is not enough to feed a family on the most basic foodstuffs, let alone clothe, house, marry, bury, nurse and educate them.

The returns on keeping animals are probably even lower. It has been estimated, for instance, that the return on the enormous labour of a day's work cutting fodder in the high forest for a buffalo and then making the milk into oil is often as little as one rupee or less a day (Blaikie *et al.*, 1980, p. 269). Even adding in other skimmed milk, manure and meat, many animals are literally more effort than they are worth. This is beginning to be realised by the richer Gurungs, who no longer keep large herds of animals up in the forest as they once did. Furthermore, they do not even keep oxen for ploughing, but hire them

in from poorer families who in their desperation are forced to work particularly hard feeding them in order to make a little extra money.

APPENDIX C. THE HIERARCHICAL SYSTEM OF CLANS

Pignède's description of the clan system of the Gurungs is one of the best known and most influential parts of his work. The main section of his account has been published in English (1962). The analysis is based on the supposed dichotomies implicit in the four-fold structure of the Carjat (literally "four-jat", Nepali) and, less so, the structure of the Solahjat ("sixteen-jat"). An elegant argument is based on the opposition of two priestly clans (*lama* and *lamechane*) and two chiefly clans (*ghale* and *ghotane*).

Pignède was, however, aware that a later rigid classification was probably imposed on a more flexible earlier system. For instance, he noted that in the Central and Eastern region, marriage rules do not conform to the system he elaborated, and that the presence of the *paṛ* clan suggests that "there are in fact, more than four clans". This inconsistency has been confirmed by others; Messerschmidt, for example, found that in his area "there is no evidence of this duality in contemporary marriage practice" (1976, 54).

We shall look firstly at what Pignède calls the Carjat to see how far they are, in fact, a four-fold group. We have examined some evidence from several of the older histories of the Gurungs, the *vamsavali*, and these never refer to the Carjat at all. The word *jat*, of Indian origin, is not used, but *gi* (Gurung for group or peoples) preceded by the Gurung word for three, *song*. Thus certain *vamsavali* tell of the *song-gi*, or *minha song-gi* (*song-gi* peoples). These three groups are specified as the *lama, lema* and *kona/kone*. They may intermarry. The *klye (ghale)* are treated as an entirely separate group, which is itself divided into three intermarrying groups, *samri klye, relde klye,* and *kh-hyaldi klye*. In these early histories it is suggested that for a long time the "three-peoples" were separate, only joining up with the other groups and the *ghale* fairly recently. These early histories thus confirm that Pignède was right to be unsure about the four-fold nature of the classification.

When we discussed these matters with one of the Carjat, he said that in fact *car-jat* had nothing to do with the Gurungs specifically. It

actually referred to the four Hindu *varna*, namely Brahmin, Kshatryia, Vaisya, Sudra, which he said later multiplied into thirty-six *jats*. This would seem to be an acknowledgement that an external, Hindu, four-fold caste division was later imposed on or absorbed into the Gurung system.

C.B. Ghotane agrees that the word *jat* is inappropriate and that the various groupings are really *thar* or clans, but he includes the *ghale* in this group, thus confirming Pignède's use of *plih-gi* as an alternative term for Carjat (cf. supplementary note 18). He also disputes the existence of a *lama* clan (cf. also supplementary note 61).

Turning to the Solahjat, Pignède himself noted that he had also been given the name *ku-gi* ("nine-people"), and told that there were not sixteen but only nine clans. He stated that "no Gurung was able to give me a list of the sixteen Solahjat clans". The list given in one of the legends Pignède quotes is "fantastic enough" and corresponds hardly at all to any other lists.

Again it looks as if the "sixteen peoples" may have been something rather different. In the *vamsavali* that we have seen, the identifiable groups in the Solahjat include Daria, Danuwar, Bramu, Murmi, Hanjhi, Kumal, Hayu, Chepang, Khapang, Pahari, Neware Kumal, Panchhari, Kusalya, Palahari, Musahari, and Hurkya; there are sixteen named groups in all. They have nothing directly to do with the Gurungs.

In contrast to these, the early history in the *vamsavali* and the ritual songs (*peda luda*) of the pucu (more correctly 'pa-chyu') speak of the *ku-gi* or *kwo-gi*, sometimes later translated into Nepali as *nau-jat*. The lists of these original nine groups in different *vamsavali* match well, as follows (Pignède's spellings in brackets): *krommchhain [kromcae], yobachhain, nhansin, phijon, chormi [tohrcae], rhilla, yoja, p-hhachyu [paice], kepchhain [kupcae],*. The list given to Pignède overlaps with this for four of the names, with Pignède's informant giving *mahpcae, kercae, klihbri, lehne*, and *thimce* for the other five.

It is particularly interesting that on the basis of comparing various lists, Pignède gives a list of twenty-seven clans. It might be suggested that the three-fold structure of the nine-clans is one version of several systems which are based on multiples of the number three. In the older histories we have looked at, the *ku-gi* are often referred to as the "twelve-twenty-seven" peoples. Twelve is obviously three times four and

twenty-seven, a curious number for a group, makes sense as three to the power of three, a perfect number for a three-fold system.

It would appear that in place of the rather binary oppositions of the system, with its Indianist moiety structure, the principles may be of a different, three-fold, structure. Only further research on the early histories and pucu's mythical stories will illuminate this.

Such further work may also lead to a revision of the discussion of Carjat-Solahjat relations. It seems possible that the two strata, the "three-people" and the "nine-people" have somewhat different histories and only came together a few centuries ago. When they did so, the Carjat, as Pignède explains, were often richer and asserted a ritual and social superiority. Although constantly disputed by the Solahjat, and the subject of various legal wranglings, by 1969 there was far less tension in Thak than Pignède described ten year's earlier, though there were some bitter memories.

Messerschmidt's book (1976) is largely an exploration of this conflict, through a case study. During the last fifteen years, however, the tension has largely evaporated, both in Messerschmidt's village (personal communication) and in Mohoriya. In the latter, whereas Pignède's informant had refused to ask people's clan names for fear of being thought insulting to the Solahjat, we found no such difficulty in a re-census in 1990. We asked people in Mohoriya directly about this and they said that they could talk openly about people's clans without being misunderstood.[7]

APPENDIX D. THE GHATU DANCE

With the memorial service (*pae*), the Ghatu is the most purely Gurung institution and hence worth a fuller description. Pignède's account is necessarily brief since he never saw the dance performed.

The dance is inaugurated on Magh Sirpanhimi (the crescent moon in Magh, i.e. near the end of January). Parts of it are danced from time to time until the full moon in Baisak (end of April), when the whole

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[7] For a further recent discussion of some of these issues, see Mumford (1989) pp. 40-46.

dance is performed. This final performance lasts from morning to evening for three days. Not a single episode must be omitted; if a mistake is made it is believed that the dancing girls will become sick and may die. The dance usually takes place outside in the courtyard of whoever is sponsoring it, though the first session takes place inside a house, and the last at a customary meeting place in the village.

Usually two to four girls do the dance. They are most often chosen from within the Solahjat (or Ku-gi), although there is no rule regarding this, by the dance master (*guru aba*) who will teach them. He gathers a number of likely girls, aged about 12 to 14. They must be pre-pubertal, and will commonly dance over a period of three years. The *guru aba* will start a special chant which calls down the gods, (Gangachali, Bharachalli, Deochali), "Gunga, Huwe-salli, Dew salle". Rice is sprinkled on the girls. One or two of the girls will be possessed (*gard nyeva* or *gard khaba*) by one of the gods, sitting and swaying the top half of their bodies in a circle with eyes closed. These are the ones who are selected to be the dancers. If a sufficient number of susceptible girls cannot be found, one or two others may be added.

The *guru aba* then instructs them in the various dance movements. The dance is broken into many *dada* or sequences, each with a slightly different dance movement, accompanying the story which Pignède has briefly outlined. Sometimes the girls dance these in a possessed state, being brought out of the trance after each dance by flicking a little water up their nose, sometimes the girls dance in a normal state. They wear special clothes, consisting of the old Gurung dress, and gold and other jewellery. They are helped in dressing and supported at certain crucial times, as described later, by special assistants of about their own age, who are called *adil rimeh* (or *susari rimeh*) - "the girls who bring" who may be either Carjat or Solahjat.

In the initial dance, the girls sit on small wooden stools on a mat which has been placed over a specially cleaned floor. Later they will sit on the mat, faced by a row of about twelve men who do the singing, a slow chant to the rhythm of a double-ended drum. The dance is extremely graceful, twisting, rising, and sinking, then turning in a squatting position with the hands just touching the ground. Especially important are the hand movements, particularly the flicking of the second and third fingers, which are rubbed against each other.

The story has been written down and is much as Pignède relates, but much longer. In Thak, the Queen's name was not Satiwati but Yampawoti. Pignède has no information on its origins. Informants said that it was of Gurung origin. Only Gurungs and Magars do this dance, which is unknown elsewhere in Nepal or India. We were told the names of the Gods came from the Terai, but that the source of the dance was in the central region of Gorkha. It is only danced between Lamjung and Gorkha, from the top of the Marsyangdi river down to the Magars south of Gorkha. It was thought that Paseram was a King of Gorkha. There are no Brahmins in the story.

The story is set around Gorkha, with the river where the bodies were taken being called the Jamuna Kola. We were told that the dance was of ancient origin, having been performed since the Gurungs came into this area. Although the language is an old form of Nepali and the story, as Pignède notes, has Hindi elements, this does seem a very distinctive Gurung institution. Like other such institutions it is fading away, as the old men who know the songs die, young girls have less time from their school-work and the rich soldiers who paid for performances no longer come to the village.

While the Ghatu is very important, we were told that an accompanying ritual, the Kusun (*kusun teba* - to hold a Kusun) was even more important and significant. Again, this was probably danced quite widely, but now only one or two villages still do it, for instance Bhujung and Yangjakot. Given its importance and the fact that it has never, to our knowledge, been described, it is worth giving in full a description of the performance which we saw in Yangjakot, danced in the evening after the Ghatu. The Kusun is part of the final three-day dance at Baisak *purne*.

The dance always takes place at night, outside, sometimes with the light of pressure lamps, with those girls who can go into possession and the same group of old men, who sing a similar-sounding chant. At the start, the girls are given sticks to represent hunting bows. Three girls started the dance, which was similar to that in the Ghatu. The sequence is repeated at least ten times, and the story tells of the slaying of a deer.

At this point the girls leave and the two drummers move forward to play the special *kusun* rhythm. They must play the full rhythm, and later the full counter-rhythm, otherwise they say the girls will be very ill and may die. The girls return, their necklaces and jewellry are taken from them to prevent them from destroying them. They let down their

hair. Other girls, their *adil rimeh* sit in a row behind them. The *guru aba* rubs ash on their throats, and on the throats of the singers, saying a mantra (*nó*). This is done to protect the body (*jui bar lava*) and to protect the girls from the evil eye. The *guru aba* talks quietly to the girls.

The drums begin a new rhythm, men chant, and the girls, sitting, begin to toss their heads wildly round and round in a rolling movement. The rhythm gets faster and they toss and sway, apparently likely to break their necks as they thrash with their heads and torsos, sweeping their hair on the ground and just missing each other's heads. This continues for ten minutes or so and then one girl collapses backwards and lies still. She is cushioned in the lap of her friend and her head covered with a cloth. Then the other girls each collapse after a few minutes. The drumming stops. The old men smoke and drink a little and then start to sing without a drum.

Slowly the girls get up, faces like sleep-walkers, eyes staring, slightly unsteady, clearly in a deep trance. They wander about scratching themselves, their arms, legs, face. They are then handed a strange pipe - one pull on the pipe and they hand it back. The pipe has a small bowl attached in which something is burning. They rub a little of this substance on the *guru aba's* head.

The *guru aba* asks the first girl who she is, and she says the King, and the second girl says she is the Queen. They are asked where they have come from. They answer, from the Himalayas, from Sunkuri, a place near Kailash, that they are hunting. They are asked if they have travelling expenses; the King says "yes", the Queen, "no".

Then the drums start again, they are getting ready to hunt again. The girls start their slow haunting steps again, but with less poise, eyes blank and drowsy. They are given the sticks to hold again. Suddenly one girl stops and turns angrily to the verandah. The small boys crowded there duck. Someone has mentioned the word "buffalo". Any mention of this, or of anything to do with a buffalo, sends the girls into a rage. A girl throws her stick at them angrily. One tries to undo her dress and is restrained. After further threats at the crowd and waving of sticks, they drift off with the end of their waistbands (*phogi*) held like an apron, in which they collect coins and notes. Refusal to give will again enrage them. They return and tip the money out at the *guru aba's* feet.

The girls then sit down and the drum rhythm starts again. The girls are handed the sticks, again and again they dance in a trance. The

drums then play the counter-rhythm and the girls begin to toss their heads and the top half of their bodies as in the first session. The "King" does this for four minutes, the "Queen" for six minutes and the third girl for ten minutes. They fall back as before, unconscious. The last girl had to have water splashed in her face to finally release her from the trance state. She immediately resumes her normal look and mechanically gathers up her hair and puts it in a pony tail. The whole session ended at 12.30 a.m., lasting some four hours.

The *guru aba* has no explanation for the possession or why the girls should react so strongly at the mention of the word "buffalo". We were told that the ritual dance concerned the Kusunta gods. One informant said that if asked where she had come from, the girl in a trance would say Palpa, though we have seen a different answer in the description above. The Kusunta gods live high up in the forests and dislike human beings. They live on wild forest produce such as *taro* and *teme*. The gods look people and hunt with bows and arrows. On one occasion the gods were washing vegetables in the river and some humans came higher up the river and made the water filthy with buffalo dung. This infuriated the Kusunta who killed the offenders with their bows and arrows. The Kusunta are polluted by buffaloes. This may be linked to the very strong belief in the pollution of the buffalo shown in the fact that village priests, *pujari*, have to be people who do not eat buffalo, and that pucu cannot eat buffalo.

The Kusun is obviously a dangerous and powerful ritual. If the rhythm is played accidentally, susceptible girls will go into a trance and if the correct counter-rhythm is not played they will finally die. We were told of a case where a girl went into such a fit merely by hearing a tape-recording of the rhythm. Fortunately the counter-rhythm was also recorded and released the girl. I saw another case twenty years ago where a girl became possessed and remained so for over ten hours until a man who knew the correct counter-rhythm could be brought from a nearby village.[8]

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[8] For a fuller analysis of both the music and dance, see Moisala (1991) pp. 201-286, 318-329.

APPENDIX E. RITUALS AND MYTHS OF THE PUCU.

In due course, Pignède's account will need supplementing in three ways. Firstly, his descriptions of the rituals are often short and incomplete, being a mere summary in a few lines of detailed events which often take several hours. Secondly, the rituals which he describes are only a small selection from the total repertoire of a good pucu. Pignède describes some fourteen *tēh*; I encountered twelve of these in Thak in 1969, all of which are still being done by a neighbouring pucu who serves the village. The only one not done in Thak is the *cha-gu tēh*.

Conversely, of the 43 *tēh* which were described to me in 1969, 31 are missing from Pignède's account. Thus there is a good overlap, which suggests, with other enquiries in other villages, that the number of *tēh* in existence in Gurung villages is likely to number at least sixty, and possibly many more.

Using Pignède's classification into different types of *tēh*, the following are the names of extra *tēh* which I have found.

- For illness: *ṅo-ṅe-sheba; piṅ-ṅeh-sheba; prabron lava; banaskunti lava; putli teba; rupa kweva; tan theba teh; patlu waba; dobode waba; tsagale teh; naga dsidsa piba; joalla piba; jantra keh; pwelu lava; nawmu lava; di bar lava; plogu laba (la plogu, di plogu, mula plogu); ma bideh teh; bhuta teh; sigra moshi tiba; ru toba lagyan kreeva; japa plogu; gyan seba teh; tunar lava.*

- For bad luck: *nabri-sheba; la-theba; kemma tiba.*

Thirdly, Pignède's account of the *pe* which go with each *tēh* is very incomplete. For instance, Pignède states that in the *riṅe tēh* (p. 355), the pucu recites *ćhō-dā, prah-dā noh-dā, krōlu-pucu.* In the description of this same *tēh* for Thak, the list includes 42 different *pe*. Pignède's description gives the impression of quite a short rite, which might last a couple of hours and be accompanied by the three *pe* he lists. In fact, the rite lasts about twelve hours, during which these 42 *pe* are recited and a very complex ritual is enacted.

The rituals and the myths are intimately linked, and the rituals have to be performed in exact sequence, preceded or accompanied by certain myths which are, in effect, part of the ritual, having power in themselves, a ritual in words rather than actions. For this reason it is

necessary that a full account of the pucu's rituals should include full lists of the *pe* for each ritual, in the correct order.

As with the *tēh*, Pignède only records a selection of the *pe*. He mentions some fifty by name, but his field-notes only give the texts of 41. In Thak I collected the texts of 74 *pe*. Interestingly there was not a great overlap; only roughly twelve to fifteen are to be found in both collections.

This would suggest that we have each sampled from a very much larger pool of myths. This is confirmed by taking a third sample, this time from a pucu from Yangjakot village. He knew over a hundred, 54 of which were in neither Pignède's nor my collections, and half of those we had collected were unknown to him. Furthermore, it is clear that I was only given a sample of the *pe* which the Thak pucu knew; the lists he gave of *pe* which accompanied his rituals contained the names of many *pe* which I did not know of.

An example of the lack of coverage and the richness of the possible corpus can be seen if we look at the *pe* which supposedly accompany one ritual. These are used to accompany the twelve hour *mōse ho-ba tēh* (p. 349), done to cleanse a house from evil spirits after an unlucky death, a death that occurred after a long illness, or many years ago without a memorial service (*pae*) being done. The *pe*, in order, according to the Thak pucu are:

- sane-mu, lane ṅime pe; ke aba kegu pe; rimarku tsemarku; tedah; tidah; kardah; chudah; marekaja; kuse-iame; horgion bah, horgion mah; tsadsa lewrutih; powla powdure modi yogara; podan rinalyah poh, myonalah poh, taleme pie; nimyu puja kleh, kwugu tsai kleh; posontie keh, kweba roye pyoh; shemeraku rumeraku; prada nohda; moi pe; tsodah; tohda; prohda; paeda; meeda; tsondah; aba kargore; maresonbi mwie soṅbi pe; kargoro tsadsa tidru pe; plaba tse bwomba tse; martarve khe Sirgion kleh; abi kallow we kallow anna nulla labrishaw; hora mrurah pasti sheva; shyajaku ronjaku; prayoti kyalbho pyodi kyalephi; pallauri kyallbo pyoti kyalle pih; ama toduma peebade kamon; ribuchon myabuchon; dwedu nobbi kyara tishi; aba krolu pwemae pe; whonsa kroh pucu; die marli tulva; chu cheshi; lih kyoshi; sirbi mo kibari yah; moh tuh lashi.

Although one or two may in fact overlap, there are approximately some 46 *pe* to this rite. Pignède lists fourteen *pe*, not all of which appear in the list above. Of these 46 listed by the Thak pucu, some 25, a little over half, are among those he later summarised for me. If this is roughly the ratio in all the *pe*, it would suggest that the 74 *pe* I collected in Thak constitute about half of his working collection.

The pucu also had a book of old *pe* which he no longer used. It is thus possible that there are three or four hundred *pe*, at least. Many contain important details of Gurung history and the whole corpus must be one of the richer oral traditions in the Himalayas.

The *pe* can be divided into seven major groups to see how many there are in the total list from these three villages. The largest number tell of the origins of the pucu's instruments, his drum, cymbals, belt, feathers, as well as the origin of many other useful plants, animals and things, such as fish, grains, eggs, deer, fire and yeast. There are 41 *pe* of this kind, of which Pignède collected 13.

Another set concern the stories of specific individuals, gods, spirits, ancestors, dead pucu. There are some 34 in the list, of which Pignède collected 16. *Pe* concerned with the travels of the pucu in various directions number six, only one of which Pignède has. Those associated with the pucu's shrine and ancestors also number six, none of which were collected by Pignède. *Pe* connected to evil spirits, witches, stars, luck, number nine in all, none of which Pignède collected. Those connected with sickness, number six, none of which is in the Pignède collection.

A rather different category, by function rather than theme, are those associated with death, funerals and the memorial rite (*pae*). There are some 32 of these, of which Pignède collected eleven. These are among the most interesting, and it is likely that many more of this class will come to light. For instance, *Lemku* tells of the origin of the *pae*; the *sida leva*, tells how humanity started and what happens after death; the *shirga teba*, tells of the origins of the Gurungs. Several of these *pe* are incorporated into dances, some of them taking the form of rhyming duets between pairs of pucu. Finally there is a miscellaneous group of twelve *pe* which do not easily fit into any classification, none of which Pignède collected. Some of the *pe* have several parts, others encompass other *pe* within them.

His account can be supplemented by the work of Strickland (1982, 1987) and Mumford (1989).

APPENDIX F. WITCHCRAFT BELIEFS

Pignède's short piece on the witch is very curious and needs elaboration. It gives the impression that witchcraft is a minor belief among the Gurungs and concerns non-human spirits which take the form of human beings, but are basically spirits, like the spirits of the forests or rocks. But he was able to get only a very little information on the subject.

It is not difficult to see why Pignède was so misinformed. The Gurungs are sensitive about witchcraft beliefs in two ways. Firstly, the more educated think that westerners, who do not believe in witches, will think it a backward and superstitious belief. They are embarrassed to admit to such beliefs. Secondly, it is dangerous to discuss witchcraft and in particular to name witches. The dangers come both from the witches, who may overhear the conversation and be angry, and because the investigator cannot be trusted not to pass on the information to another villager. To call a neighbour a witch is a very serious accusation and could lead to ill-feeling. Thus it was only by accident that I came across witchcraft beliefs.

It soon emerged that witchcraft beliefs and fears play a very large part in Gurung thought and life. Witches are ordinary people who are inherently evil and have supernatural powers. The major part of the pucu's activities are concerned with countering their power. It is impossible to understand the divinations and rituals of the pucu if one does not understand something of their nature. They are called *pumsyo* (female) or *pumimhargya* (male) in Gurung.

The following account of witchcraft was given me in 1969 by a pucu, whose knowledge came from dealing with witches as part of his ritual activity. "Sometimes when one encounters a dog or cat a good distance from the village one knows it is a witch in disguise....Witches meet at the intersection of three or seven paths and in the graveyard (*chogon*). Some forty or fifty years ago a lot of people used to see a little thing about the size of a clenched fist jumping about on the paths in front of them at night. It was impossible to overtake or kill them. These *pamri*

did not make people ill, but they were made by witches or evil spirits. Witches congregate in the graveyard exactly half way through the night. They used to eat the flesh of dead people. Another favourite activity is swinging on the lintel of doors (*mra kudi mweba*). They don't dance or have sexual intercourse with each other, though they do sometimes utter guttural, throaty, noises like "how how". They probably know each other. They do not fly, but can run very fast."

The account continues: "witches often bewitch people for no apparent reason, without provocation. They also harm those who refuse their small requests or who argue with them. They very often put evil substances in the food of people whom they see eating especially tasty food and this makes their victims sick. They can do this from a distance. Witches may bewitch any members of their own family or clan, including their own spouse and children. They may also cause all types of disease. Although many people believe they can kill adults, they can probably only kill small children and make adults very thin or swollen."

"If a small accident occurs, for instance a slight fall, one accepts that it is probably one's own fault, but if one falls very badly one may wonder whether a god, a *bhut* or *pret* (evil spirits) has caused it. I have seen two witches at a distance at night, who seemed to be light or shadows and who did not answer to questions. Sometimes people who are a little drunk hit witches if they meet them."

"People may become witches from seventeen or eighteen years of age, learning from parents or friends. The children of witches are not always witches themselves. There is no special initiation rite. Witches have a few spells and very few medicines. They also have an iron petticoat, which they wear all the time. This sometimes clanks a little bit at night. It is strong protection against a pucu's mantras. They never travel around naked. They also wear a small belt, *koni*, which is just the belt part of the loincloth which all men used to wear in the village."

"There is no connection to wealth; witches can be poor or rich. The word for witch, *bokshi*, is often used as a term of friendly abuse, particularly with children. A pucu's family may include witches if a pucu accidentally marries a witch from another village. Once a witch always a witch. They are a little greedy, but not especially so."

Some further details may be added from an account given by an educated village schoolmaster. "There were many witches in the village. People knew their names, but should not tell anybody. Both men and

women can be witches, but women are the more powerful witches. Both old and young women can be witches. Witches are those who are alive now, not the spirits of the dead. Every night they go to the graves and take back dead bodies to their houses to devour. It is possible to see a fire in their hands at night. They walk around with their hands clenched in front of them, their hands flaming. It is dangerous to speak bad words about witches, in case they overhear. When the cause of an illness cannot be diagnosed, then witchcraft is thought to be at work. Only some deaths are thought to be caused by witchcraft. Witchcraft is declining. The pucu and the witch are foes; it is said that many years ago they agreed to be thus, the pucu healing, the witch harming. It is possible to learn the art from any witch, but it is usual to learn from a relative. If a mother is a witch, "most of the children learn the witchcraft". There are about seven or eight witches in the village, most of them women. The whole matter is secret and we should keep quiet about it, though it would be possible to publish information on it. If a witch goes on making trouble, then the elders of the village may expel her. This happened in another village about eight years previously. Witches eat the heart and blood of victims. We must talk very carefully with a witch."

The following rituals of the pucu were specifically said to involve battling against witches: *mose tiba, pih ṅe sheba, noh ne sheba, putli teba, rupa kweva, tan teba, patlu waba, dobode waba, joalla pigba, di bar lava, sigra moshi tiba, gyan seba teh, tunar lava.* The last of these , I was told, is no longer done since it involves a direct attack on the witch and this is prohibited by law. It takes place as a part of other rites such as the *noh ṅeh sheba*. The witch attacks the pucu, so the pucu is angry and sends the evil force back by throwing rice and other foodstuffs and saying powerful mantras, which "returns" the illness. A few days or months later a witch is ill and this is believed to be caused by the pucu. The earlier reference to a powerful pucu killing seven witches probably refers to this rite. The pucu often sees the witch during these rituals and sometimes privately tells the patient's family that a certain witch has made them ill.

I carried out a "census" of people thought to be witches in a Gurung village in 1969 with one experienced informant. In the hundred sample households, there were 23 suspected witches. Seven were not Gurung (3 Blacksmith, 2 Tailors and 2 Magars), five of the 16 Gurungs were from the Carjat, the rest from the Solahjat. All were female, except

for a male Blacksmith who was married to a witch and was himself a witch, and likewise a male Magar The youngest was a female Tailor of 20, the oldest was a female of 87. The ages were distributed thus: 20-9 (1), 30-9 (4), 40-9 (6), 50-9 (2), 60-9 (7), 70-9 (2), 80-9 (1), most were between forty and seventy. All were married, and all but four of the women were from other villages. It was noticeable that several of the older women had powerful personalities, though others seemed pleasant and quiet.

This preliminary account, supplemented by numerous discussions, shows how important witchcraft beliefs continue to be in village life. Nor do such beliefs automatically fade away with education and town life. We asked a class of children in the seventh class of their education (aged about 13) if they believed in witchcraft and they unanimously said they did. We talked to a number of Gurungs living in Pokhara, some of them retired British army officers, and they also all still believed in witchcraft. Finally, we talked to some young men and women in their twenties, who had been educated all their lives in Pokhara and were attending the University. They said that they no longer believed in *bhut* and *pret* (evil spirits), but they still believed in witchcraft.

APPENDIX G. THE GURUNG CONCEPT OF SIN

Although Gurungs use the Nepali word *pab* for sin, and there does not seem to be a Gurung equivalent, which supports Pignède's argument about the absence of the concept, there is also counter-evidence that something akin to "sin" and supernatural judgment is a component of Gurung thought.

An example of this occurs in the *pol bionba gyan toba* ritual of the pucu which is done soon after death. A section of this is called the *mani toba* and is specifically concerned with cleansing the deceased of all his or her "sins" so that the soul can take the path to the land of the dead. The *pab kondi pe* is recited. This calls down the spirit of the dead person and describes how every action, organ of the body and so on has been "pab", sinful; killing animals, not giving fair measures to the poor, thinking evil thoughts. Every possible sin is recited, as if a god were accusing the spirit. "From birth you have sinned in every way". Then the

pucu dips his magical necklace in pure water, sprinkles husked rice over the corpse, sounds his conch, sprinkles the corpse with the purified water. He then says the *mani toba pe*, which lasts for half an hour. "We are washing you pure from all the sins listed above so that you can go up to the village of the dead; whatever you have done wrong is now purified. All your sins are wiped out, even if you had wanted to kill your father or mother. Now the path is open."

Pignède describes *mahne la-ba* (p. 378-379), but does not mention the *tasu waba*, which is done by the klihbri at the end of the *pae* to take away all evil and sin.

Quite frequently in conversation people will say that it is "sinful" to do something. For instance, I was told that it would be sinful (*pab*) to go on using an old and toothless ox for ploughing, since it was no longer strong enough to plough. Or again, when a small child was about to pour milk onto her rice, she was told that *pab kaba* since the rice was mixed with meat and meat juice, and to join the two was sinful.

I carried out a survey in 1969 in which I asked several questions to elicit ideas of sin. I asked twelve people of various ages and both sexes whether "good" and "bad" people went to different places after death (*sorga* - heaven, *norga* - hell). Only three thought they did go to different places. I asked what were evil thoughts or deeds. Killing people and animals topped the list, followed by lying, deception, greediness, theft, envy, etc. I asked whether a person would be punished in this life if he did some evil act and if so by whom. All informants were adamant that there would be no punishment in this life; only after death, four people thought, might one be punished. I asked the causes of various illnesses and misfortunes and in no cases was "sin" given as a likely reason. Finally, I asked whether, if a person did something bad and no-one found out, they would feel worried or anxious. Only one informant referred to "sin" and its danger; and one other said he felt guilt (*aparadi*). Otherwise they were adamant that they would not be worried.

To summarise, while there is clearly a concept of "sin", which needs to be washed away, it seems to be a much more mechanical and

generalised concept than the Christian complex of sin, retribution and guilt. It does not affect this life, but may lead to problems in the next.[9]

APPENDIX H. TRANCE AND POSSESSION

Pignède states that there are no trances or possessions or ecstasy in the pucu's work. I thought the same on the basis of working with the Thak pucu, who never mentioned possession, and did not appear to become possessed. If this were universally true, it would distinguish Gurung pucus from the classic ecstatic shamanism of inner Asia.

It was therefore with considerable surprise that when attending the *mose tiba* ritual in 1990, at the point when the evil spirit brought down the departed soul and confronted the pucus, we saw them go into what appeared to be a frenzy, beating their drums wildly and shaking back and forth.

Afterwards we asked one of them what had happened and he said "*deota kaba*" [*kh-hlya kh-haba*]. Now the word *kaba*, pronounced slightly differently, can have the meanings of "to come" (the God has come), or "to seize hold of". We confirmed with the pucu informant that he was using the word in the second sense. He was quite explicit that he was possessed, using the same word, *tarava* (to shake), which is used to describe the very obvious possession in the Ghatu and Sorati dances. He said that he saw the god in his possession and wished that he could draw what he had seen. He was very surprised to hear that a pucu who works just north of Thak said that he was never possessed.

On asking whether such possession occurred in any other rituals, we was told that it occurs in the *pwelu*, which is a special ritual done in a pucu's own house to his personal god. We witnessed such a rite in the house of a man who, although not a practising pucu, was of a pucu lineage and hence kept the *pwelu* shrine in his house. On this occasion, rather than the pucu becoming possessed, the person in whose house the rite was performed became possessed, convulsively shaking for two or

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[9] Yarjung Tamu describes the ancient belief in *chhaiph-harje* (chon-kwi. *Sarab* nep.). Few people today understand or know of the concept. Minor sins such as killing animals or petty lies can be washed away by the *pucu* after death. Major sins, such as murder or serious theft, cannot be washed away and will result in a bad afterlife for the offender or his descendants will suffer from *chhaiph-harje*.

three minutes. This was clearly possession. We told that only a few persons have this gift (and it is considered to be a gift). The signs of the ability to become possessed start at about the age of ten or a little younger.

It might be suggested that this possession is a relatively new feature, perhaps copied from the *dhame* tradition spreading from India. Indeed, Pignède decribes a pucu going to study the science of the *dhame* (p. 314-315). Yet this was denied by our pucu informant. He said that his father, now aged over eighty and one of the most respected living pucus, since becoming a pucu had always gone into a state of possession and shaken (*tarava*). Our informant had himself done so since he had learnt the pucu skills in his late teens. He also said that the word *tarava* is referred to in the *pe*, for example, in *pundul-pucu*.

This alters our picture of the pucu, taking him much closer to the shamanic priests of Mongolian and central Asia from where the Gurungs are said to originate. Further similarities to central Asian shamanism are described in Mumford, 1989, *passim*.

APPENDIX J.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TAMU TRIBE[10]

by Bhovar Palje Tamu and Yarjung Kromchhe Tamu

The history of the Tamu is preserved in the myths and legends of *Tamu Pye* (Bonism), such as the *Pye-ta Lhu-ta*, which are recited by the Bon priests, the *Pa-chyu* (mainly from the Lhyege and Kromchhe clans) and the *Kya-bri* (mainly from the Tu and Mhobchhe clans), in a mixture of *Chō-kwyi* and *Tamu-kwyi* (Tibeto-Burman dialects).

Tamu Pye refer to the very beginnings of civilisation, more than eight or nine thousand years ago. They tell of the origin of human beings and of the materials that they used. Tamu priests still use some of these primitive utensils in their *teh* (rituals). The *Pye* do not seem to have

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[10] As this is an original piece of work by the two authors, their spellings have not been altered to match Pignède's.

changed substantially over time. They refer to the ancestors of the Tamu, their *Aji-khe* (*Khe-ku*, nine male ancestors), *Aji-ma* (*Ma-i*, seven female ancestors), and *Aba Kara Klye*, spiritual master, lords, ghosts, etc.

Tamu Pye tell how the first people lived in Chõ (Tso) Nasa, a lakeside village, where they planted the first grain, barley. Then they dispersed to other places such as Sa Nasa, Dwo Nasa, Si Nasa and Krõ Nasa, the latter being in the South, hot and fertile. Later the northern Chõ Nasa was rich in religious activity, speaking *Chõ-kwyi*, while the southern Krõ Nasa was rich in agricultural activity, speaking *Tamu-kwyi*. Other Tamu villages developed according to their proximity to the northern and southern ends. There are also stories about the discovery of fire, how the drum was first made, and many other things in the *Pye*.

The ancestors of the Tamu, *Ma-i* and *Khe-ku*, seem to have been represented as seven lakes (the former) and nine mountain peaks (the latter). Though there is no real evidence, there is a traditional assumption that Chõ Nasa, as described in the *Pye-ta Lhu-ta*, lay in western Mongolia, and was ringed by seven lakes and surrounded by three mountain ranges. To the south, in Sinkiang in Western China, north of Tibet, in the Turfan Depression, lay Krõ Nasa. Large lakes are called *nuur* in Mongolia, *nor* in Western China, and *tso* (*cho*) in Tibet.

In Tamu tradition, as they migrated from one site to another, they would call the new site by the old name if it was similar in aspect. *Tamu Pye* tell that the soul of a dead person is believed to go first to Koko-li-mar-tso, which is under water. In the Qinghai region of China lies a huge lake with an island in the middle called Koko Nor (or Ching Hai). It is similar to Hara Usa Nuur (one of the seven lakes) of western Mongolia, and some near-by places have names with end in "chow", such as Lanchow, Liang-chow, Kan-chow, Su-chow, etc. These could conceivably derive from the Chõ Nasa of almost six or seven thousand years ago, described in *Tamu Pye*. Similarly Sa Nasa, Two Nasa, Si Nasa and Krõ Nasa could be placed in the Qinghai, Kansu, Sichuan and Yunnan regions of China respectively, running southward.

Among the minority groups in China are the Tu peoples who live in the area around Lanchow and the Naxi (Nansi) peoples who live in the Sichuan and Yunnan regions. Tu and Naxi are also the names of two of the nine Tamu clans.

The Tibetans (Bod people) apparently migrated from the border regions of Qinghai, Kunsu, Sichuan and Yunnan. Later came a wave of

Han (Chinese) immigrants. Chamdo (Chhyam Toh: nice village) in eastern Tibet seems to have been the gateway to Tibet for all these peoples. A neolithic settlement at Karo not far from Chamdo has been dated as being more than 4,600 years old. The Han settlers called it Kham suggesting that they grew millet there. They may have been the ancestors of the Khampa (Bhotiya) or Khambu (Rai) of Nepal. Later, a third wave of immigrants, possibly the Mhina Kugi (people of the nine clans) replaced the Han settlers. By this time it had become a cattle grazing area though it may also have been an important trading post.

From Chamdo, the Mhina Kugi moved westward to the Yarlung valley of the Lhoka region. Here they were known as Tamu (Tubo) by 1,000 B.C. and during the course of time developed Bonism, the pre-Buddhist religion, with its priest, the *Nam-bo* or *Pa-chyu*. Some of the Bon priests would have travelled to Chõ Nasa.

Another group of Tamu settled to the west of Lhoka.

There is a mountain called Tsan-Tang Goshi near Tsedang (Che-Tang?). The historical encounter there with Nya (Tri) Tsan (Po) around 2,500 years ago and the story of Nha-Chan (*nha*: ear; *chan*: pulled, elongated: long ears) in Tamu Pye are undoubtedly the same. Nha-Chan, the strong, was alone when he met the herdsmen and joined up with them. He helped with the hard, dangerous tasks of the tribe. Later he became known as Rhima-rchhe (great). By trickery he was married to a royal servant girl (a poor Kugi), Chã Pa-mrishyo, instead of to the daughter of a Klye (king). His decendants became the Kwonma (mixed) clan.

Some Tamus settled in the northern Bagmati region, having gone through the Kerung or Ku-ti Pass, and became Tamangs. A sixth generation descendant of Nha-Chan from Lhoka joined with another group of Tamu, perhaps around Shigatse. Nyatri Tran-po, a thirteenth generation descendant of Nha-Chan became king of Lhoka around 300 B.C. Tamus may have settled in the Mustang area before the *Kyar-Bo* (*Kyabri*) developed in Lhoka around 100 B.C. Under the thirty-third Tsan-Po king of the Tubo dynasty, the powerful Song-Tsan Gam-po (629-650 A.D.), Tibet was unified and the capital moved from Lhoka to Lhasa. The power shifted to other border tribes during this period. Buddhism (not Lamaism) was adopted alongside Bonism. Later, in the eighth century, Padma Sambhav (an Indian vajrayanist) founded Lamaism (Nyingmapa or red sect). He mixed Bon beliefs (the five lords), Hindu

concepts (Garud Puran) and Vajrayan (Tantra mantra) to Mahayan, and populised it as Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetans used to worship him (*Om Mani Padma Hu*) more than the Buddha. Though the Bon priests were repressed by the Lamaists and the State, Bonism remained strong until the thirteenth century. However, the Bon priest of the Tamu or Tamangs do not mention Song-Tsan Gam-po as they had left Tibet many centuries before he came to power.

Bonism, the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet, was a very advanced form of animism. It is still preserved, almost solely, by the Tamu priests in the form of the *Pye-Ta Lhu-Ta*. It relates the practical experiences of the ancestors in matters concerning the soul, the spirits, masters and lords, as lessons for the living, through which the priests can overcome the power of witches and ghosts. Bonism divides the universe into three worlds: heaven, the earth and under world. It is believed that when a person dies, his soul leaves the body and lives on in an invisible dream world. The priests' role in the *Pae* is to carry the soul across Tibet towards Qinghai and then make it fly to heaven (the world of the ancestors), following the route given in the *Sya-rka Kwe* in the *Pae*. According to Tibetan mythology, Bonism is categorised as:

1. Nam-bo (Dol or Black Bon) whose priest is the *Pa-Chyu* which is the oldest.
2. Kyar-bo (Striped Bon) whose priest is the *Kyabri* which possibly dates from around 100 B.C.
3. Lam-bo (White or Gyur Bon) whose priest is the *Lambo* which dates from 838 A.D.

The Nam-bo *Pa-Chyu* is the oldest and first priest of the Tamu. There is no known date of origin. It may have branched into other forms during its development, adding storiesof later ancestors as time went by.

Some Nam-bos seceded and started Kyar-bo (*Kya-bri*) after the murder of Drigum Tsan-po (a seventh generation descendant of Nyatri) at Lhoka around 100 B.C. His descendants secretly invited some Bon priests and wise men from west Ngari, Drusa and Shangshung with the aim of revenging Drigum's murder (Lo-ngam Dazi). Later, a Bon scholar, Shamthab Ngonpo, introduced the doctrines of six different non-Buddhist schools of philosophy, and combined them with the native Bon religion to form the complete Bon doctrine of the Tubos, known at Kyar-bo. Around that period the first lunar calendar was started. According to that ancient calendar, *Lho-sar* or *Losar* (New Year's Day) is celebrated

on 15th Paush (early January) as it is among the Tamus of Nepal to this day, and it is still celebrated on that day in some areas of Shigatse. Tamus used to call the *Kyabri*, *Pai-bo* (*Pai* meaning Bhot or Tibet).

Pa-chyu and *Kyabri* are similar in many ways. They both use the same language. They are both connected to the world of the ancestors through Chõ Nasa. But the third Bon priest, the *Lambo*, reads his books in the Tibetan language which is not understood by the Tamu.

Lamaism flourished in Tibet until the Lamaist Tsanpo, Tritsung (Triral Pachen), was murdered in 838 A.D. His elder brother, Lang Darma, took the throne, reintroduced Bonism and persecuted Lamaism. Shegur Luga, and others of his persuasion, continued the translation and reform of the Buddhist scriptures and enriched the Bon doctrine. Lam-bo (or Gyur Bon) veered towards Lamaism. It is also called translated Bon and lies somewhere between Bonism and Lamaism. For instance, Gyur Bon needs animal sacrifice as do the other Bon priests. It is different from the four major sects of Tibetan Buddhism: Nyingmapa, Sakyapa, Kagyupa and Kadampa.

Nowadays, there is a peculiar type of Lama in Tamu society, a fourth priest, some of whom have changed from the third. *Kyabri* and *Lambo* need *Pa-chyu* with them for the main rituals. The new Lamas do not need them. They talk about being blessed by Buddha but they find difficulty in understanding the Buddhist texts, and Tibetan Lamas are critical of these Tamu Lamas. However, they have been able to influence a poorly educated society and have caused trouble to both Bonists and Buddhists as a result.

According to the Tamu legends, Tamus must have settled in Mustang around the first century A.D., just after the Tamangs settled in Bagmati zone. These two groups have been separate for no more than three thousand years. There are two *Kohibos* (*Kohmbas*) in Mustang, one in Fa-li-pro Myar-so for *Pa-chyu*, the other in Li-pro Myar-so for *Kyabri*.

The Tamu used to hunt long distances following wild animals. They would move their settlements if they found a better place to live. While they inhabited the banks of Mha-ri-syo (Marsyangdi river) in Manang, they adopted a new *Klye* (master) as their chief or king. His descendants are called Klye (Ghale), an additional clan of the Tamu tribe.

Some Tamus crossed the Annapurna range in the course of hunting around 500 A.D. They liked the high land and sowed some grain

there. When they returned on a second visit, they had a good harvest. On the third visit peoples from three clans came and settled there in their three groups, calling it Kohla Swomae Toh. It was the first historical village of the Tamus on the southern slopes of the Himalayas and it became the last united village too. Other Tamus migrated later from Manang and Mustang. Those remaining in Mustang became the Thakali when other Tibetan groups, and probably some Tamangs, arrived.

At Kohla, there was a revival of *Pye-Ta Lhu-Ta* (Bonism). Some further chapters were added there after the long silence of the centuries of migration. *Tamu Kwyi* (Tibeto-Burman language) speaking Tamu peoples with their pure Mongoloid features, tried to refine their *Bonic Pye, Pae, Failu, Teh, Parka, Lho-sar, Dhu-kor, Rwo-di,* etc., their customs and culture which is totally different from that of the Hindu Aryans.

At Kohla, the Klye, Kugi, Kwonma and clan chieftains were king, ministers, administators and *Kroh* (*Mukhiya*) respectively. Though they had different ancestors, Klye and Kwonma did not intermarry. However, both did intermarry with the Kugi. After some centuries of peace, politics began to affect development. An interesting turn of affairs happened as a result of a *Pae* for Chimi-Udu. The *Pae* was conducted first by Syo-labe Pa-chyu, but the *Asyo-Kwei* was not given. The soul could not proceed on its journey and sent a message to repeat the *Pae* with a piece of *Asyo-Kwei*. The *Pa-chyu* performed the *Pae* again with some *Kyabris* in the manner requested. As a result, the *Kyabris* became the royal priests and were given the name *Klye-pri* (*Khe-pri*). Thus, these priests gained greater prestige in the society. *Pa-chyu* were by ancestry from the Lhege and Kromchhe clans, *Klebri* from the Tu and Mhabchhe. Other clans were not taught to be priests originally.

The increase in population caused great problems at Kohla. Groups of people moved on, to the south-east, south and south-west, to start new settlements. It would appear that there were no other tribes in the Gandaki zone except for some neolithic Kusundas (now extinct). Beef was eaten by the Tamu before their contact with the Hindu castes.

A legend tells how some of the Kwonma clan went from Siklis to Nar in Manang to learn Lamaism from recently-arrived Tibetan Lamas. On their return those who had learned well were called Lam, those who had not, Lem. Then the Kwonma divided into three sub-clans, Kwon, Lam and Lem, according to the closeness of their kinship

connections with each sub-clan. The Lam and Lem (followers of the Lama priest) formed marital links with the Kwon (followers of the *Pachyu, Kyabri*). In fact, these sub-clans (Swogi) are the descendants of the same ancestor. Despite this they formed strong groups. Later, during the period of Samri Klye of Siklis, Lam and Lem began to marry with the daughters of the Klye. However, the Kwon did not change their custom and did not marry with the Klye, although they had different ancestors. Lamas introduced the word *Guru*, indicating high prestige, and it became the familiar term when distinguishing the tribe from other tribes or castes, eclipsing the word *Tamu*.

After the formation of separate groups, minor conflicts occurred between the Kugi, Swogi and Klye. The Swogi were accused of being firstly, the descendants of a servant girl (Chã-fi), and secondly, of marrying their "brothers and sisters" (ie. persons of the same clan). There may, of course, have been instances of marriages with servant girls and of marrying within the clan, but these have not become an issue in quite the same way. The split between the clans has caused, and still causes, great trouble among the Tamu.

CONTACT WITH HINDUISM

In the thirteenth century, some Rajputs and their Brahmin priests fled to Khasan (western hills of Nepal) from Muslim rule in India, bringing with them their Untouchable Sudra slaves. There they converted the Lamaist Khas peoples to Hinduism. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they extended their influence to the Magars of Magarat (mid-western hills). In the sixteenth century they moved into Tamuwan or Tamu territory (Gandaki zone) bringing with them Magars and Thakalis. The Tamu were most resistant to the new faith, having a deep belief in the efficacy their own priests and rituals. However, the Hinduised Khan Thakuries founded small kingdoms in Syangja and gradually their people took over the low lands in the Gandaki region which were not settled by the hill-top dwelling Tamu. The literate Hindu Aryans were experts in exploitation and domination, introducing the idea of caste, making slaves, and pursuing a policy of divide and rule. They studied the Tamu and noted the weaknesses in their systems of government. They introduced and applied the law of dominant castes and

attempted to erase the original elements of social structure, trying to make them touchable Sudras under Hinduism.

Until the sixteenth century, the Tamu peoples knew nothing of the Hindus, having their own Ghale kings in the Lasarga, Nuwakot, Kaskikot, Arghou, Kohla, Pojo, Liglig, Gorkha, Warpak, Syartan, Atharasaya, and other regions. There were no kings in certain areas due to the bad impression given by the dissolute Samri Klye of Siklis.

Legend tells how Jain Khan (Rana?) came to the banks of the Kali Gandaki from Sringa, Gulmi. There he married the daughter of the Karki king, and with his help, crossed the river. He defeated King Bhyag-sya Klye and founded the first Hindu Thakuri kingdom in Lasarga (south west Syangja) with the help of Rañas and Thakuris. His Kulayan priest of Alam Devi was Maski Ranan Magar. His son, Surya Khan, became king in Khilung, and his grandson, Mincha Khan, king in Nuwakot, Syangja. Mincha's son, Jagati Khan (Kulamandan Sahi) had seven sons and became king of the whole of Kaski in time.

Dadhiram Dura and Madhav Dura (who had migrated from Parbat to Dura Danda), Chamu Dhigal (Dura) from Sindi, Sukraj Kepccha (Dura) from Gorajo and Kusmakar Ghimire, met on the banks of the Madi river (Karputar?). They planned to adopt a Sahi prince to become their king in Lower Lamjung in opposition to the Thansi Ghale (Rag-sya) king of Pojõ (Ghanpokhara). So the five men went to Nuwakot in Syangja and asked Jagati Khan for one of his sons. They took the second son, Kalu Sahi, together with officials of various clans, and made him king at Purankot in Lamjung. After three months, the Ghale king invited Kalu Sahi to Sulikot on the pretence of making a treaty with him. Together they went to the forest of Sisidhunga to hunt, and there Kalu Sahi and his companion, Naran Dura, were murdered.

Six other Hindu or Hinduised clans went to Nuwakot to take princes for their kings. King Jagati Khan was much troubled at his lack of success in defeating the Ghale king of Lamjung. Instead, political policies encouraging domination and exploitation by the Hindus, and the obliteration of the previous social system were adopted. A royal priest, Bhoj Raj Purohit, composed the first pseudo genealogy of the Gurung (Tamu) on 9th Falgun 1594 V.S. (1694 V.S. is found in the published genealogy, but the historical events coincide with 1594 V.S.). In that false genealogy, the ancestors of the Gurungs were said to be Aryan, not Mongol, the migrations said to be from the south instead of the north,

Nha-Tsan becomes Chanda Thakuri, and the accusations made against the Swogi were transferred to the Kugi with a view to elevating the smaller number of Swogi and adding them to the royal clan, Klye, which resulted in long-lasting conflict between the Swogi and the Kugi.

By means of the the false genealogy, the king intended that his third son, Jasbam (Yasobrama) Sahi, would take the kingdom of Lamjung. Four Swogi chieftains, Kubi Kyala Lam, Sab Kyala Lam, Puru Kyala Lem and Kau Kyala Kwon, were called secretly and the genealogy and its implications were described to them. With the promise of more land and power, they agreed to the murder of their uncle, Thansi Klye. They went to Põjo and told the Klye that the second Sahi king was very brave and clever, could not be killed by deception, and therefore it was better to make a treaty with him concerning the boundary than be defeated in battle. The Ghale king believed them and went to Baluwa Besi (near Besi Sahar) without weapons as invited. The Sahi's men then drew their weapons from their hiding place and killed the Ghale king and his Kugi officials. His body was tossed into the Marsyangdi river. Even today, some men of the Ghale clan refuse to drink water from that river.

Jasbam Sahi and his elder brother's pregnant wife, Jasatawati, were hidden in a cave near the junction of the Midim (Gaumati) and Ramunche (Ram) rivers. After the death of Thansi Klye, they were brought to Sindure Dhunga and married there, then they were taken to the capital, Purankot. The four Swogi chieftains were made "descendants" of Chanda Rajput of Chittaur like the Khans (rather than of Nha-tsan, the ancestor of Song-tsan Gam-po of Tibet) for their part in the deception. They used to introduce themselves as Maha Guru (borrowed from Lamaism), but the word Guru was used solely for Brahmin priests, and they were given a new title, "Gurung" (Guru+Ange: part of a Guru). The Kwon changed their clan name to the Hinduised Ghotane (Gotame or Gautam) and the Lem, to Lamichhane. The four chieftains got the power they had been promised, since when the Kwonma of Lamjung have dominated the other clans on the basis of the false genealogy. The Lem also increased in power so that they became known as Plon (boiled).

Through the use of the false genealogy, King Jagadi went on to capture the whole of Kaski. That genealogy was stronger than hundreds of arrows or swords. Pratap (Pasramu) Sahi, son of Jasatawati (or Kalu Sahi), was sent across the Dordi river to be king there, as previously

promised. The elder son of Jasbam, Narahari Sahi became king of Lamjung and the younger, Drabya Sahi, became king of Gorkha. Their mother, Jasatawati, ordered that neither of her quarrelling sons cross the Chepe river which formed the border between them. The six clans, Adhikari, Dura, Khanal, Bhandary, Suyal and Ghimire, formed the royal assembly of Lamjung, and another six clans, Pande, Pantha, Arual, Khanal, Rana and Bohora, formed the royal assembly of Gorkha. There was no Gurung in either Ram Saha, the grandson of Drabya Sahi, changed the title Sahi to Saha. His descendant, Prithvi Narayan Shaha conquered Nepal.

THE BRAHMINISED GENEALOGY.

There was a Surya Vamsi (Indian Hindu) king of Bharadwaj Gotra. He had two sons. The favourite younger son, Nochan, was crowned, thus disobeying the rules of succession. The rejected older son, Lochan, left the palace and went towards the Himalaya to lead the life of an ascetic. He was accompanied by his wife, Kali, Bali Acharya (son of the priest Mukunda of Garga Gotra) and his wife, Kasi, and the slave Kersingh Khawas and his wife, Phali.

On the way they met two beautiful prostitutes and stayed the night with them. They were made drunk by deception, and while they were asleep the prostitutes broke their *Janai* (Brahmanical cord), and fled. So the Chhetri prince and the Brahmin priest's son lost their caste. Then they went and settled in a cave in the Himalaya where they freed the faithful slave, raising Khawas to Thapa and eating what he cooked. The descendants of these three couples is as follows:

1. Chhetri Prince - (Bharadwaj Gotra)	Lochan	(a) Ghale Maha Guru (son)
		(b) Ghotane Maha Guru (son)
	Kali	(c) Lama Maha Guru (son)
		Laxmi (daughter)
2. Brahmin Priest - (Garga Gotra)	Bali	(d) Lamichhane Maha Guru (son)
		Kumari (daughter)
	Kasi	Nari (daughter)
		Mali (daughter)

(a, b, c, d = 4 Jate Gurung)

3. Servant Thapa - (Khawas)	Kersingh	}	16 sons (16 Jate Gurung)
	Phali	}	10 daughters

The children of Lochan and Bali cross married, but Kersingh's sons and daughters married each other. The 4 caste Gurungs (descendants of Brahmin and Chhetri) are superior to the 16 caste Gurungs (descendants of the Khawas slave), so the latter should serve the former. This was the false genealogy that was written for King Jagati Khan of Nuwakot by his priest Bhoj Raj Purohit (9th Falgun 1594 V.S.), and used to facilitate the conquest of Lamjung, and its divisive effects are still felt to this day.

In reality, the Tamu tribe is made up of eleven clans in three groups, each group having its own sub-clans.

Group A: Mhina Kugi (9 clans) -

1. Lhyege	2. Kromchhe	3. Tu
4. Mhabchhe	5. Chormi	6. Tworchhe
7. Nansi	8. Rhila	9. Yoj

Group B: Kwonma (10th clan, also called Swogi for having 3 main sub-clans.)

1. Kwon	2. Lam	3. Lem

Group C: Klye (11th clan, having sub-clans.)

1. Samri	2. Rilde	3. Kyalde

Each group has its own stories of origin. No one is superior or inferior because of his clan as the Tamu tribe is not part of the Hindu caste system. There is no 4 and 16 in the actual history of the Tamu.

The Hindu Aryans coming up to the Gandaki zone from the west had noted 16 non-Hindu tribes who were not on their side:

1. Mahji	2. Kumal	3. Darai
4. Danuwar	5. Bramu	6. Murmi
7. Hayu	8. Chepang	9. Khapang
10. Pahari	11. Neware Kumal	12. Pechahari
13. Kusalya	14. Palahari	15. Musahari
16. Hurkya		

They were called 16 Jate and regarded as inferior by the Hindus. The more numerous Kugi Tamu group were slotted in with these 16 castes. The less numerous Swogi Tamu were grouped with the royal Klye, and regarded as the superiors of the former. Thus the Hindu Aryans sowed the slow poison of division to achieve their ends.

ROYAL DECREES CONCERNING THE GURUNGS

Yasobrahma Sahi, the first Hindu king of Lamjung, had forgiven Chak Chakui (CC: marital tax for women and widows) and Moro Aputali (MA: non-transferable lands of childless marriages) to the Gurungs of Lamjung. However, other subsequent rulers did apply them.

Order for tribute (1862 V.S.) - "The Amilidar of Thak-Siklis has to gather 26 varieties of deer, birds, ghee, herbs, etc. in certain quantities from his villagers, and send them to the palace yearly." - King Girvan.

In Ashoj 1862 V.S., in the reign of Girvan, one Gurung from each house was forced to go to the far west to fight in the battle of Kangada against Kaji Nayan Singh Thapa. The Gurungs were forced to fight in a cause which meant nothing to them. Those who reached the battle were forgiven their tribute, but those who returned having only gone part of the way were doubly punished. Many Gurungs did travel the long way, and fought in the battle, knowing little of the political reasons behind it.

After the battle, the Gurungs organised themselves to resist domination, exploitation and unfair taxation. Many Gurungs met together and applied to the Government to forgive CCMA, as Yasobrahma had done, in return for an agreement that tribute should be sent from each house yearly.

Lal-Mohar (Mangsir 1865 V.S.): "CCMA is forgiven to all the Gurungs; to use Brahmin priests for 10 rituals instead of Lama; Gyabri to perform the Argu in tribal religion." - King Girvan.

Tama Patra (Baishakh 1873 ?): "CCMA is forgiven to all the Gurungs as before, except for soldiers. From now onwards use Brahmin priests." - King Girvan.

A Government letter was sent to them in Kartik 1875 V.S. setting out two alternatives: a) CCMA forgiven if they use Brahmin priests; b) CCMA reinstated if they use Gurung priests. The Gurungs did not want CCMA reinstated, but they did want their own priest. They maintained the previous agreement and did not pay the taxes.

Lal-Mohor (Magh 1875 V.S.): "All the Gurungs, Ghale and Lamas of Lamjung are forgiven the CCMA. Be purified by Lama and Gyabri at birth and death." - King Rajendra.

Tama-Patra (Baishakh 1883 V.S.): All the 4 Jat, 16 Jat, Gurung, and Ghales, except for soldiers, are forgiven CCMA. Use Lama and Gyabris as necessary, and use Upadya Brahmins in Brahmanical tasks."

The mention of Jats provoked a dispute which was resolved in 1885 V.S. with the decision that all Gurungs were the same and equal, whatever their clan. The Tama-Patra of 1883 V.S. was amended in Chaitra 1885 with the exclusion of the words 4 Jat and 16 Jat.

Lal-Mohor (Push 1924 V.S): "All the Gurungs are the same and equal. Those who say that there are superior and inferior groups among the Gurungs will be fined Rs. 20/-."

THE SECOND GENEALOGY

Sikhar Nath Subedi published a genealogy in Benares, India, in 1911 A.D. (1968 V.S.) called "Thar Gotra Prabarawali". He added a further comment which caused great irritation. In his book he wrote that the 4 Jats, Ghale, Ghotane, Lama and Lamichhane Gurungs were the princes, and the other 16 Jats, Thapa Gurungs, were the slaves. Thus the 16 Jat should serve the 4 Jat and be hired for weddings and other tasks

by them. Sarbajit Krochai Gurung, the Krōh (Mukhiya) of Sal Danda in Kaski, brought a prosecution against the writer. The judgement was as follows.

Bharadari Bata Gareko Jaheri Faisala.

1. Tama-Patra (1885) - No inferiors or superiors; all Gurungs equal.
2. Rukka (1886) - No evidence of 4 Jat and 16 Jat among the Gurungs.
3. Lal-Mohor (1924) - Fines of Rs. 20/- imposed on those who maintain that one is superior to the other. Act No. 15,37,38,198.
4. Dispute in 1965/6 - Person who maintained there was a difference in status fined.

According to these records, all Gurungs are the same and equal. No one is superior or inferior according to his clan. Thus the author, Sikhar Nath Subedi should be fined Rs. 20/- for the crime of writing against Gurungs without any proof. 1st Jeth 1978 V.S.

Bharadari Faisala (decision of 13th Jeth 1978).

Order - a. Not to sell the book in the markets.
b. Impound the remaining copies.

Hindu religious songs and dances were the first introduction to Hinduisation for the tribes, the second was the observance of Hindu festivals. These were introduced to their villages by the soldiers of Nepal, India and Britain, who all had Brahmin priests in their battalions. The Gurungs have celebrated national Hindu festivals for two centuries, but with little understanding of the religious aspects. They have never forgotten their Tamu priests. Even today, most of the Tamu peoples are Bonic Buddhists, and the rest either follow Bonism or Lamaism.

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